SERMONS

ON

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL

DOCTRINES AND DUTIES

OF

CHRISTIANITY.

BY JOHN G. MARSHALL.

HALIFAX.

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INTRODUCTION.

No Justification, or Apology, can be requisite, or will be offered by the Author, for the Publication of the Discourses contained in this Volume, *because* he does not belong to the *Clerical* Order, but is merely a *Layman*. We are informed in Scripture, that when a Persecution of the Christians arose, immediately after the Martyrdom of the zealous and faithful Stephen, the Apostles remained at Jerusalem; but all others belonging to the Church,—being many hundreds,—"were scattered abroad," and "went every where, preaching the Word." The *greater* number, if not *all*, of these, were *Laymen* following the various *ordinary Secular Occupations*. In all succeeding ages of the Church, the Publication and Expositions of Sacred Truth, have, in like manner, been made, more or less extensively, by similar characters. All this accords with the declaration of Scripture,—"The Lord gave the Word, great was the company of those that published it." If, therefore, *Laymen*, spiritually qualified, have *Scriptural* Authority to preach *Oral* Discourses, surely, they have an *equal* warrant, to *publish*, them in *print*. The case is altogether *different* as to the administration of the *Sacraments* and *Ordinances*. *These*, are to be dispensed *only* by such as have been *duly* admitted, and belong to the *Ministerial Order*.

It may be interesting to some, to be informed of the particular circumstances, which first led to the Author's design, to compose and publish these Discourses. Many years ago, in his private and prayerful search into the Sacred Scriptures, he commenced transcribing,—under the appropriate heads,—Passages on all the principal *Doctrines* and *Duties*; intending them to form a *Manual* for Personal reference, instruction, and guidance. After persevering in this edifying, and pleasing exercise, for a number of years; and when the Manual had become largely extended, the thought arose, that he would publish it, merely in *that* form, for the like benefit to others. While this was in contemplation, the idea was suggested, that a series of Discourses, on some of the princi-

pal subjects contained in the Manual, might, in some degree, prove *additionally* useful; and, therefore, in the earlier part of the year which has just closed, he commenced the preparation of these Discourses. If no other benefit should follow from their publication, the numerous Passages at the Head of each Discourse,--taken from various parts of the Inspired Volume,--will serve to show, the perfect *Analogy* and *Harmony*, of the whole of Revealed Truth, on each, and all of the Sacred Doctrines and Duties therein set forth. As regards the Sentiments expressed by the Author, on the Several Subjects, he must of course be responsible; and will only say, that they are those which he has most decidedly formed, after very many years of perseveringly prayerful and studious examination of the Holy Scriptures, on those Subjects.

Under these views and explanations, it only further remains for the Author to say, that the Discourses are offered to the Public, with a sincere Prayer, and fervent desire, that they may prove instrumental, in furthering the *spiritual interests* of some of his fellow men; and, thereby, assist the Cause of his Gracious God and Saviour, to whom he is under such *infinite Obligations*, for all the *Grace* and *Goodness*, both as to *Spiritual* and *Temporal Blessings*, which have followed him *all* his days.

Halifax, 2*nd January*, 1862.

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SERMON I.

ON DIVINE REVELATION.

"This book of the law shalt not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein, day and night, that thou mayest observe, to do according to all that is written therein."—Josh. i. 8.

"Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."—Prov. xxx, 6.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah viii, 20.

"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my word."—Is. lxvi, 2.

"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."—Math. xxii, 29.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they, which testify of me."—John v, 39.

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope."—Rom. xv, 4.

"Now, all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.—1 Cor. x, 11.

"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii, 15, 16, 17.

"The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.,'—2 Peter, i, 21.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things,

God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life; and out of the holy city; and from the things which are written in this book."—Rev. xxii, 18, 19.

Although, occasionally, individuals appear, even in Christian countries, who have brought themselves into such a state of mental blindness, and moral depravity, as to doubt or deny the existence of an original and intelligent author of all visible objects; yet the belief of a Supreme being, or beings, who produced them, has ever been general, or almost universal, in all the nations and tribes of the earth. All history and tradition, and innumerable memorials, of various descriptions, give ample testimony to this belief. It has been the common sentiment in all parts of our world, and in the most dark and heathen ages.

Among the various nations and tribes of this continent, at its discovery, or who have since become known to us, this belief has been universally found. In truth, the faintest glimmering of reason, alone, would seem sufficient to call up that idea or sentiment. It is the first impulse, and forms the foundation, of what is usually called natural religion. But, beyond this primary belief, no merely human reasonings or efforts, however aided by the most profound and enlightened science and discoveries, or even moral enlightenment, could ever penetrate to discover the true nature or character of that great Originator of all visible beings and things, or of our relations and responsibilities to Him,—or of his acceptable worship and service; and, above all, what would be our destiny beyond the grave. For these, and various other purposes, towards yielding any degree of repose, or contentment to the human mind; a supernatural revelation was indispensably requisite. Such a revelation in some form, or degree, has, from the first, been a common expectation and belief, among all mankind, destitute of the true religion. It would seem, indeed, that to every human being—believing in a first intelligent cause, on the least reflection, and viewing the objects around him, and the various scenes through which he was constantly passing, and, more especially, with reference to what might succeed the close of life,—it would almost instinctively occur,

that some revelation from that original Author of all would be given, regarding man's present existence, and his duties, and interests, in relation to his Maker, and, especially, as to any future state. Ancient historical, and other records, as well as traditions, have shown the necessity which was almost universally felt, for some such revelation; and have exhibited, a variety of modes, in which it was supposed to have been given. How, or when, such a supposition, or sentiment, had its origin, or was implanted, it may be difficult, or impossible, to discover, or explain. There have, doubtless, been various conclusions on this part of the subject, but what is the real truth concerning that origin, is now of little or no importance.

In accordance with that general sentiment, among ancient heathen nations, the supposed revelations of a supernatural description, which they held to be true, were founded on traditions, the commencement of which they did not seem to know precisely, but believed, that such traditionary revelations were originally made, by the deities in whom they believed. Several of the pagan nations have long had writings, which they believe in, and revere as such supernatural or divine revelations. The Hindoos have their Beids, their Institutes of Menu, and their Geeta; in which latter work, the sayings of their divine and incarnated Creeshna, is held to be recorded. The Parsee worshippers of fire, have also, their original writings, which they consider as supernatural or inspired revelations. The Chinese have the writings of their Confucius, and others, which they consider and venerate, as of the same character. The most modern of all such supposed supernatural, but false revelations, is that of the great imposter, Mahomet, in his book called the Koran.

As to the *possibility* of a revelation being made to men, by the Deity, it must, surely, be clear to every rational mind, that He can, if he pleases, convey to them the knowledge of his will, either by dreams and visions,—by an audible voice,—or by an immediate impression upon the higher faculties of their reason. And that He can accompany His own *Revelations*, with such a clear and powerful light, as shall discover the divinity of them, and convince us of their reality, no one can doubt, that considers the vast power and influence which he who made the soul of man, and perfectly knows its frame, must needs have, upon the mind and understanding of man.

Some such revelation, then being perfectly *possible*, we may next consider, which is most *probable*, and most agreeable to the original thoughts or opinions we have concerning him, whether he would, or would not, make such a revelation. It has been already intimated, that it has ever been the common sentiment of all mankind, who believed in the existence of a divine Being, that He would hold some kind of communication with them, and afford them some needful revelations. This was, indeed, the foundation of all the religious rites and ceremonies which heathen nations pretended to receive from their gods. What gave rise to all their superstitious arts of *divination*, was the belief, that their gods had intercourse with men, and, by various means, gave them intelligence of things to come.

Indeed, it can hardly be imagined, that a Supreme Being would make reasonable creatures, on purpose to know him, and to be happy in the knowledge and love and admiration of him, and yet, withdraw himself from them, without giving them any visible token of his presence, or any other means of obtaining information as to his character, but what they might perceive in the reflection of his works. If we must live in another world, and be happy, or miserable there; if that great Creator, exercises any care and providence over mankind; or, if he has any regard to his own honour and worship; it seems absolutely necessary, that he should give some sensible tokens of his *being* and *presence;* and instruct them, more perfectly, in his nature and will, than what any reasoning of their own minds, without a divine assistance and direction, can possibly teach them. In forming any notion or apprehension, at all just or proper concerning a God, we must believe him to be infinite in power, knowledge, and holiness, mercy and truth. We may, then, as well believe, there is no God, at all, as imagine, that infinite *knowledge* should take no notice of what is done here below;—that infinite *power* should suffer that attribute to be insulted and despised, without requiring any satisfaction;—that infinite *holiness*, should behold the whole world overspread with wickedness, and find out no way to remedy it;—and that superstition, and idolatry, and all the tyranny and effects of sin, for so long a time, should enslave and torment the bodies and souls of men; and there should be no compassion in *infinite mercy*, nor any care over a deluded world, in a God of *Truth*.

In certain of the civilized heathen nations, of ancient times, some great men, occasionally appeared, who were raised far above the common level, and despised the stupidity and credulity, as well as more gross abominations of the vulgar. But, although, they could see the vices and follies of others, their knowledge was not able to attain true wisdom. They were involved in doubts and scepticisms, and unable to settle their minds in what was really good and right. Being ignorant of the cause of the depravity of human nature, of the origin of evil, and of the proper manner of worshipping and serving God acceptably, they had, among themselves, constant disputes and differences, about his *Being* and *Providence*, about his inspection of human actions;—his being pleased, or displeased with them,—about the immortality of the soul, and its final condition after death; and on other most important points. They speculated, and reasoned, constantly, and deeply, concerning them, but seem never to have arrived at any conclusions, which, even to their own minds, gave entire satisfaction. In matters of moral good and evil, though some of their rules and reflections are just and commendable, and form a reproach to many professors of christianity,—who so greatly fail in many of the moral duties it enjoins, yet those heathen moralists, allowed of many actions, which were manifestly vicious and immoral, such as *revenge*, and *self murder*, popularity and vain glory; and the gratification of several base desires and propensities. In proof of this, need only be mentioned, the judgment of Cicero, one of the wisest and most improved among them, who says,—"Do you think that these things, (meaning the precepts of morality,) had any influence upon these men, (except only a very few of them) that thought, and wrote, and disputed about them? No: who is there of all the philosophers, whose mind, and life, and manners, were conformable to right reason? Whoever made his *philosophy* the *law* and *rule* of his *life*, and not a mere boast and show of his wit and parts? Who observed his own instructions, and lived in obedience to his own precepts? On the contrary, many of them were slaves to filthy lusts,—many to pride,—many to covetousness, and the like."

The things which those philosophers were fully persuaded of, the most obvious and necessary duties of life, they had not authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon the minds of

others, so as to influence their conduct. The precepts they laid down,—how reasonable soever in themselves,—seemed still to want weight, and to be no more than the *precepts of men*. Hence, none of them were ever able to work any remarkable change in the minds and lives of their hearers. They seemed sensible of the defects of their own rules, in this particular. They saw, and acknowledged, that human nature, was strangely corrupted, but could not discover the true cause of it, nor find out a sufficient remedy. The great duties of religion, seemed to be laid down by them, rather as matters of *speculation*, than as rules of *practice*, and not so much urged upon the hearts and lives of men, as proposed to their admiration. The wisest of those heathen philosophers, indeed, held the opinion, that without the assistance of a divine revelation, the world could never be reformed. "Ye may e'en give over," says Socrates, "all hopes of amending men's manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some other person to instruct you." "Whatsoever is set right," says Plato, "in the present ill state of the world, can only be done by the interposition of God."

A truly divine, and particular revelation, being, then, so indispensably needed, some may be disposed to think it rather surprising, that it was not made earlier than the time at which the first of the inspired records were given. Several obvious, or sufficient reasons may be assigned for such delay. The Scriptures inform us, that the divine Being, all along, made such declarations of himself, to the Patriarchs, as they were obliged to transmit, and did transmit, to their posterity. Moreover, there was not, then, that necessity for standing revelation, when the *longevity* of mankind, gave such a strong and convincing sanction and authority to *tradition*. Adam, lived 950 years, with whom, Methusaleh was contemporary 243 years; and with the latter, Noah 600 years, and Shem 100 years. After the flood, Noah, (who lived till within two years of the birth of Abraham,) and Shem, (who lived till Isaac was fifty years old) had fresh revelations given to them; and the religion of those times, it would seem, was a mixture of natural and revealed precepts and sanctions. Abraham, when called, became the great reviver and restorer both of natural and revealed religion, by himself and his issue; and by his nephew Lot, and his issue; all of which, in course of time,

grew up to many and great nations. Many learned men have thought, that the pious and patient Job, lived during this period; and we know, from Scripture, that in the gentile world, there was, in Abraham's day, a Melchisedec, a man of renown, for the knowledge and worship of the true God; and perhaps, as to these same points, may also be mentioned, Jethro, the father in-law of Moses.

A very learned divine, who lived in an early period of the last century, and to whose labours the writer is indebted for some of the foregoing ideas and sentiments, has written on the subject, as follows:—"There was not an absolute necessity for a standing Revelation, until men's lives grew short, and Tradition, by that means, came to lose its credit." "Upon giving of the law, the Jews became, as it were, *a burning and shining light* to the rest of the world; and by the providence of God, in all his dispensations to that people, effectual care was taken, that all the necessary points of religion, which concerned mankind, in general, should, by them, be communicated to the rest of the world. In the time of Joshua, and some time after, the wars of Canaan, carried in them such visible marks of a divine power, on the side of Israel, as served to spread the fame of the true God, in all the nations round about. In the time of David, the Jews grew a powerful people; and the achievements of their King were crowned with an uncommon success, (as himself tells us,) '*to declare the glory of God among the heathen, and his wonders among all people.*' In the time of Solomon, the fame of the true God, was so diffused all around, that we find, not only the Queen of Sheba, who came from the East to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but Hiram, King of Tyre, likewise, blessing the Lord God of Israel, who made Heaven and Earth. Upon the division of the ten Tribes, and the erection of the kingdom of Israel, distinct from that of Judah, the many leagues and wars which these two kingdoms had with the kings of Egypt, Syria, Babylon, and other nations, could not, but exceedingly conduce, to the propagation of the true religion; and give the Prophets an opportunity, of working their miracles among the heathen. The captivity of the Jews, for seventy years, in Babylon, made their religion almost as well known there, as in Jerusalem itself; and for this reason, we find it recommended by several public Edicts; and all the people, under that large Empire, commanded to

'*tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for He is the only living God, and steadfast for ever.*' The restoration of the Jews, by Cyrus, and his peculiar favour to them, (which raised their repute among other nations,) was ordained for this very end, '*that they might know from the rising of the Sun, and from the West, that there is no God besides him, who created all things.*'

In accordance with the foregoing views, *Theodoret* a Christian writer of an early century, has observed,—"God ordained the nation of the Jews, to be a guide to all nations in divine knowledge. For like as He appointed, sometimes, Moses, and at other times, Joshua, and then, Samuel, and, afterwards, one or other of the Prophets, to take the charge of the people, and by a single man, of approved wisdom, benefitted the whole *brotherhood;* so by the single nation of Israel, did God vouchsafe to call all nations, partakers of one common nature, to become partners also, in the same common Religion."

As regards the point, that the Scriptures contained in our Bible, are authentic writings, and really a *divine revelation*, although, those who may read these pages may never have doubted, as to their being of that character, yet, it may not be unprofitable, but rather useful to some of them, to exhibit, briefly, a few of the numerous proofs, and valid reasons, which clearly show the authenticity, and inspiration of these Sacred Oracles. In ages past, and even in more modern times, a few proud and presumptuous, or profane and immoral writers, have ventured forth to impeach or cast doubts upon them, in part or the whole, but their sophistical cavils and objections, have always been promptly, and thoroughly, exposed and refuted. In truth, there are no books, containing records relating to past ages; no facts or events mentioned in history, or in any other manner, which have had any thing like the amount of evidence of their origin and veracity, which has been given, in confirmation of the *authenticity* and *inspired character* of the Scriptures of the Sacred Volume. On these points, the proofs have indeed been multitudinous, and of every variety, which even imagination could suggest.

In the *Old Testament* there are 39 Books, composed by between *twenty* and *thirty* different writers, all belonging to the one nation,—the Jewish people;—and written at many different periods. These circumstances, alone, would render

it next to impossible, that spurious or false writings, could, from time to time, be imposed upon the whole nation, as truly divine revelations. The *five* first Books, called the *Pentateuch*, were composed by Moses, inspired and instructed for the purpose, and contain all the divine institutions, laws and ordinances, ceremonial appointments, and sacrificial observances, to be held and obeyed by that chosen people of Israel, who, just before, by Almighty power, after its most miraculous displays, had been brought out of Egyptian bondage. These five Books, have, ever since, been held by that people, and are still preserved by them, as inspired writings, composed by that great early leader and ruler of their nation. It is quite incredible to suppose, that any person or persons among them, at any later period of their history, could have imposed such writings upon the whole nation, as authentic, and as having been composed in any previous age. The same reasons and arguments will apply, as to their historical books, of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, the Chronicles, Nehemiah, and Ezra; also of the several books of the different prophets,—*sixteen* in all,—who wrote at various periods. Had such sacred historians and prophets, not actually lived and wrote those books, at the periods assigned to them, and had the facts and events recorded therein, never actually occurred, in the national history, these books would never, in any subsequent period, have been received by the priests and rulers, and the nation at large, as *authentic*, and *inspired*, and as having been written at such previous periods, and by the persons whose names they, respectively, bear. The same may, also, be said, of the Psalms of David, their King; and also of the books of Solomon, their next Sovereign, ever celebrated among them, as the wisest of men. If a person in the present day, in any civilized nation of the world, were to put forth a book or books, describing great, and even miraculous facts and events, as having occurred in some previous periods of the history of such nation, of which occurrences, there were no records or memorials, or even traditions, would such pretended events be believed and accepted as genuine by the whole nation? On the contrary, we must feel convinced, that although some few ignorant and very credulous persons, might yield them some credence, the whole fabrication would at once be rejected, as an imposture, by all the rest of the nation, and would be soon entirely exploded and vanish.

The Jewish priests and Scribes, and other Ecclesiastical persons, were always, most scrupulously and technically careful, in the preservation and transcription, of all their Sacred books. So much so, indeed, that if, in transcribing a manuscript, or book, a single *word*, or even *letter* was omitted, or misplaced, the whole sheet was laid aside, and a new and perfectly correct one was substituted. In all their national calamities, captivities, and dispersions, they have, ever, carefully preserved all their Sacred books, and have them at the present day; and they are the same, which form our Old Testament Scriptures.

The fulfilment of numerous prophecies and predictions, set forth in many of these Sacred books, and which occurred at different periods, and concerning different countries and events, also attest the authenticity of the books, and their inspired origin and character. Of these prophetical declarations, may be mentioned, the predictions concerning the destruction of the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires,—of the nation of Edom, and of Tyre and Sidon,—the exactly 70 years captivity of the Jewish people, in Babylon, and the destruction of their Temple and Capital City, and the desolation of the land generally, at that period; all which had long been foretold by several of the prophets.

Fourteen, or more, of their prophets, and other inspired writers, have been mentioned, by *name*, by the Saviour, and some of the Apostles; and numerons sayings and events, recorded in these Old Testament Scriptures, have, by them, been referred to, as we find mentioned in the Gospels, and other New Testament books.

As regards the New Testament Scriptures, the proofs of their origin, and authenticity, as well as inspired character, are similar to those relating to the others; and are more numerous, and, if possible, even more decisive. There are 27 Books of these Scriptures, written by *eight* or *nine* different persons, and several of them directed to the converts to Christianity, in *twelve* different places and countries, by *name*, and,—with the exception of *five* to *individuals*,—all the rest are for the Church and the World at large. The same reasons and arguments, which have, already, been briefly given, as applying to those earlier inspired writings, will, equally, if not more forcibly, apply to the New Testament Scriptures. They

have been known to the Churches of all denominations, and sects, through all ages, since the times when they were, respectively, written, and have been mentioned and referred to, through all periods since, by many Ecclesiastical writers, in various countries. Among these may be mentioned,—as the earliest,—Eusebius,—Justin,—Irenæus,—Clement,—Ignatius,—Jerome,—Tertullian, and several others; some of whom wrote as early as the *Second* and *Third* Centuries. They, all, refer to the New Testament Scriptures, as authentic and inspired writings. Even the earliest infidel writers against Christianity, such as Celsus, Julian, and others, always admitted that there were such Scriptures, though they denied their inspired character. Manuscripts of these Scriptures, are very numerous, and many of them of very early dates. Several of them are still remaining in some of the countries of Asia, and may be found in all the nations of Europe, in their Colleges and public Libraries, and in the Archives of various Institutions, many of which are of high Antiquity; as, also, in the libraries of many ancient and illustrious families, by some members of which, they were obtained in comparatively early ages of the Church, and they have since been carefully preserved.

The destruction of the Temple, and of Jerusalem, and the dreadful carnage and sufferings among the Jewish people, during the invasion and conquest by the Roman Army, and their dispersion into various countries, all foretold by the Saviour, as recorded by three of the Evangelists, and as we know, from history, literally fulfilled, afford convincing proof of the truth of the Scriptural predictions concerning those afflicting events. The dispersed state of that people, through so many ages since, to the present day; and their state of separation and distinction from all other people, form a further, and an abiding evidence of the inspired and veritable character of the Scriptures, in which the predictions of that dispersion, and separate state, are recorded.

As to what is called the *internal* evidence, that the Scriptures are a divine revelation, it is as conclusive and satisfactory, as the external proof of their authenticity and Sacred origin. The *style* of the writings, as a whole, so different from that of any mere human compositions, of any age or nation;—the *sublimity* of the doctrines and descriptions, re-

garding the Divine Being, his attributes, perfections, and works;—the *holiness* of the principles, the *purity* of the precepts, and *moral excellence* and *beauty* of the duties set forth and enjoined in those venerable records; and the *impartiality* of disclosure, as to *good* and *evil* in the conduct of the Servants of the Lord; with many other particulars which might be mentioned, all concur to exhibit, most fully, the divine origin, and consequent truthfulness of the whole of these Sacred Oracles.

This precious Revelation, contains all the certain knowledge the world possesses, regarding the perfections and character of the Deity; our relations, responsibilities, and duties to Him; our duties to each other, and our real duties and interests as to ourselves. It also affords us, all the precise information we need, or can possibly obtain, concerning our condition after death, and all things in a future state. By the exercise of natural reason, and a close and intelligent observation of things and events under immediate view, a person, unbiassed by previous profane, or sceptical sentiments, will be, as it were, instinctively, and necessarily, led to conclude, that there must be some great, and intelligent, original cause of all visible creatures and objects. Here, however, the merely natural mind must come to a stand, as to anything having the appearance of certainty, beyond such a *primary* conclusion. All its subsequent reasonings and reflections, concerning the true attributes and character of that original Being, and of the real nature, and the extent of the responsibilities, and duties, just mentioned, and most especially as to all things relating to a future state, will be, merely, speculative and uncertain. True and satisfactory knowledge, on these most important subjects, has never been obtained, even in the most refined and exalted stages of civilization and science, nor can it be obtained, in any other way, than from a truly divine revelation. Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and other ancient, as well as modern nations, in their most advanced state, while destitute of that revelation, never attained to any thing, even like an approach to that true and definite knowledge; but with reference to all such nations, the Scripture declaration has, ever, fully applied "the world by wisdom knew not God."

Surely, then, our naturally ignorant, depraved, and helpless

race, is under infinite obligations to the Great Creator and Preserver of all, who, of his infinite wisdom and benevolence, has given us, in the Sacred Scriptures, such a full and perfect revelation, on all subjects, needful for us to know, regarding Himself; and with relation to all our religious, moral, and other real duties and interests, as to this life: and, also, as regards our expectations and hopes of happiness, in a future and eternal state. Here, alone, can we truly and fully learn, and safely repose, as to all our present duties and real interests,—our mental and spiritual tranquillity,—and everlasting welfare. The writings, and other instructions of pious and good men, largely imbued with divine truth, may, indeed, be helpful in a subordinate degree; but let none who are at all sensible of the value of their immortal spirits, and desire to know and do the will of God, and secure their safety and happiness hereafter, fail to search diligently and prayerfully, into that only sacred depository of truth, for "all things pertaining to life and godliness," and ever abide by it, as their sole directory for faith and practice. It reveals, and offers the spiritual armour, with which we are warned and exhorted to gird ourselves in contending against all our visible, as well as invisible enemies, and wherewith, alone, we can, as promised, "come off more than conquerors," through the might and grace of "Him, who loved us and gave Himself for us." He, is, therein, revealed, as our Prophet, Priest, and King, as well as our Advocate, in the midst of a throne, not only of holiness, and justice, but equally of love and mercy. This gracious revelation has been given, as divinely declared, that we may "become wise unto Salvation," through faith in that Almighty and loving Redeemer. Instead, therefore, of slighting or neglecting it, let all who are favoured with this Sacred guide, imitate the example of Him, who exultingly declared,—"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day;" and of another zealous and faithful soul, who has said "thy Word was found of me, and I did eat it, and it was unto me the joy and the rejoicing of my heart." This precious guide and guardian should ever be consulted with the deepest reverence, and most implicit submission to all its momentous and infallible announcements. While reading, or hearing it, we should think, as is really the case, that its infinitely wise

and glorious Author, is, then, speaking to us, and requiring us to hearken, and receive his instructions. It contains awful threatenings, and examples, to alarm, and restrain from sin: precepts, and commands, to guide in the path of duty, and gracious and alluring promises, both as to time and eternity, to encourage and cheer us, amidst the temptations, trials, and sorrows, which, in a greater or lesser degree, are the lot of all, while passing through this probationary state. There are also many solemn warnings, as to despising or neglecting that Sacred revelation. It declares, that "whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed:"—and again, to the disobedient, its divine Author reproachfully says,—"What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee." "Take heed, *how* ye hear," said the Saviour:—"he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Here, it must also be remarked, that in order to a right and full understanding of the *spiritual* meaning, and proper application of many most important portions of that Sacred word, it is essential, to seek and obtain the illuminating influence, of that divine spirit of light and truth, by whom it has all been indited. "The natural man," it is said, "receiveth not the things of the spirit of God," "neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The pious psalmist prayed, "open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law:" "make me to understand the way of thy precepts;"—"in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." It is said of the Saviour, when instructing his disciples,—"then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." Believers are exhorted to "take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Now, we know, that in order to any execution being done by a sword, there must be a power to wield it. In like manner, the energy and influence of the divine spirit are required, to make his own word quick and powerful for the conviction and conversion of a soul. Let all, then, seek that enlightening and quickening power; and for confidence of receiving, let them rely on the gracious promise, which says,—"if ye who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much

more shall your heavenly Father, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Observe, that the precious gift is here *freely* offered, to *all* who ask it. May none, therefore, imperil their souls, by refusing, or delaying, to secure the inestimable blessing.

There is a great and often ruinous error, which must here be noticed, which is committed by many, when their minds are first led into exercises regarding religion. Neglecting, or slighting, the only sure light of revealed truth, they commence and pursue a course, of merely human, or natural thoughts, and reasonings, and are, thus, led on, from one conjecture, and opinion, to another, on various points relating to religion, and after a time, bring their crude and erroneous suppositions, into settled conclusions; and form something like a system, which they are induced to believe, is consistent and true, and then, they begin to search for scripture to sanction and verify it. This is a most perilous mode of procedure: Through the natural pride and perversity by which it is prompted and sustained, its deluded votaries, in innumerable instances, become at length involved in destructive errors and heresies.

On every point of doctrine and practice, the Scriptures of truth, must be first prayerfully consulted. There is no safety in any other course. Most of the heretical sects, which have opposed and afflicted the Christian Church, have, doubtless, had their origin, and increased their profane adherents, through such merely human and presumptuous reasonings, and unscriptural conclusions. We find it divinely foretold, that some should arise, who would "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction;" and of others, who would "turn aside unto vain jangling, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." We are exhorted, to "receive with meekness the engrafted word;" and are warned, that "if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

There is another error, which prevails with many, and though not ruinous in its consequences, like the one just mentioned: yet, it is right and becoming to avoid it. It is that of speaking of the Scriptures, in such language as tends to convey the idea, that they were merely the compositions of the writers, whose names they bear. As an instance of this, how often do we hear the divine laws, contained in the books of the *Pentateuch*, called the laws of Moses. Indeed, most persons, even among Orthodox Christians, generally speak of them, in that

way. A person among us, involved in pernicious errors, has of late, publicly spoken and written of those laws in that unsuitable language; and has contended, that they have all,—*moral* as well as *ceremonial*,—been entirely abrogated. Now, on examining the Scriptures in which these laws are recorded, it will be seen, that not a single one of them, either *moral*, *civil*, or *ceremonial*, was either *devised*, *suggested*, or *framed* by Moses. Even, as relates to ceremonial and typical matters, we find that the ark of the testimony,—the altars—the table,—and its furniture, the golden candlestick,—the veils, curtains, boards, bars, coverings, and every other part, and particular, appertaining to the sacred tabernacle, as to number, size, form, and appointed place, were all *designed*, *described*, and *enjoined* by God himself. Certain persons, by name, were, by divine selection, specially called, and endued with skill and power, to make and prepare them all. Not, even, the number of curtains, or of the bars for the altars, or of rings for bearing the table, and the Ark,—the number or placing of the branches, the knobs, and flowers of the candlestick,—the garments and ornaments for the priests, the composition of the oil, or incense, or any other particular, however minute, was left to be devised, or performed, by, or at the will, of Moses, or any other person. After all particulars had been expressly prescribed, by God himself, He gave to Moses, the strict and solemn command,—"See that thou make all things after the pattern showed to thee in the Mount." For the erection of the Tabernacle, and taking down and conveying it, similar divine and special directions were given.

The sacrificial offerings, and ritual ordinances and appointments, the numerous purifications, and cleansings, enjoined;—the *moral* and *civil* laws and institutions, of every description, were, in like manner, given by *divine* and *special* command. When made known to Moses, the divine injunctions to him, for giving them to the people, were in the following, and similar terms,—"Speak unto the Children of Israel, and say unto them;"—or "Command the Children of Israel;"—or "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,—Speak unto the Children of Israel, and say unto them, this is the ordinance of the law, which the Lord hath commanded." Some of these forms of divine direction, for making known the laws of the people, are used more than a *score* of times. Any one who will look

through the Sacred books, in which those moral, civil, and ceremonial laws are recorded, will see, that not a solitary *one* of them, was either *devised* or *framed* by Moses, or enjoined by *his* authority. He had no more to do with the making of them, than a person who lived a thousand years, before or after him. He was, *merely*, the divinely chosen *medium* or *instrument*, through whom, they were made known to the priests, the elders, and people generally.

As to the prophetical Scriptures, it is expressly declared, "the prophecy came not in old time, by the will of man, but holy men of God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and again, "the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David." The precepts, warnings, and threatenings, addressed to the people, by those inspired men, were all, by divine intimation, or express command.

We, occasionally, hear, even from Evangelical pulpits some such language as this,—"Moses has enjoined,"—"John has declared;"—"Paul has commanded." To say the least, all such language, regarding the laws and institutions, the doctrines and precepts of the inspired volume, is *unguarded* and *unsuitable*, and has a tendency to lessen, in many minds, that reverence and sense of obligation and authority, which should ever be entertained for the Divine Oracles. Some, on hearing such language, and not adverting to the direct inspiration of the writers, may even be inclined to think, that they might be mistaken, on certain points, and, thus, injurious scruples, and doubts, may arise. The great and deeply learned St. Paul, referring to his efforts to communicate gospel truth, has written;—"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and with power;" and again,—"which things, also, we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" and, in another place, he says,—"the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord."

To conclude, let all who desire to be sound in the Christian faith, regard and obey these inspired warnings and commands;—"Be not wise in thine own eyes;" "take fast hold of instruction and let her not go;"—"desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby;"—and also bear in mind this solemn announcement, "He will judge the world in righ-

teousness and the people with his truth." And with equal sincerity and earnestness, let them ever yield a ready and implicit obedience to all the precepts and injunctions of that sacred revelation, remembering it is therein declared, that the Redeemer is the Author of Salvation, *only* to such as "obey him." Those, only, who, from a loving and abiding faith in Him "have their fruit unto holiness," shall "enter through the gates into the city;" obtain through grace a covenant right to "partake of the tree of life," and receive and enjoy, the glories and blessings of the everlasting inheritance, which He so freely, and richly, purchased for them.

SERMON II.

ON THE DIVINE BEING,

AS HE IS REVEALED IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

The preceding discourse having treated of a Divine Revelation, it seems appropriate to examine next, with all becoming reverence and submission, what its glorious Author has therein made known to us, concerning his nature and attributes. The sublime and primary truth, disclosed in that revelation, is contained in John iv, 24,—where it is declared by the Saviour, "God is a Spirit." He is a purely Spiritual Being, or Essence, without bodily form, or "similitude;" "whom no man," in this mortal state, "hath seen, or can see." He is declared to be "the Father of the spirits of all flesh," and in whom "we live and move and have our being." The inspired Psalmist said,—"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend

up to heaven, thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."—"The darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day." He is every where, and always present, throughout the Universe. He has formed and sustains, and all things are ever "naked and open before his eyes." He always existed, as the same unchangeable Being, for it is declared of Him, in the Sacred Word, "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God;" "the same yesterday, today, and forever;" "without any variableness, or shadow of turning." Our finite minds cannot grasp or comprehend, this sublime idea, of an *everlasting intelligent existence*, and, yet, even a short exercise of sound reason, will show, that it must be a truth, for how could *non-existence*, or entire *vacuity*, originate or produce any being or object whatever? Such a supposition is altogether opposed to any exercise of reason, and quite impossible of conception, or belief.

Before proceeding to remark on the divine attributes and perfections, as set forth in Scripture, it seems appropriate, to show what revelation declares, as to the nature of the Divine Being, in his *triune* and yet *united* existence. On this sublime subject, there is abundance of scriptural evidence, showing, in clear and precise language, that there are a *plurality* of persons, united in, and composing the *one* eternal and glorious Deity. Some may, probably, be disposed to say, that it would be better, to avoid, here, any examination of this sublime and awful subject. When, however, it is duly considered, what numbers there are, who profanely deny, or doubt, this Sacred truth; and, also, how much there is, of real ignorance of scriptural proof concerning it, even among evangelical Christians; and, further, what a ruinous error, such a denial, really is; and, yet, again, what numerous means are in operation, to extend this heresy, and other unscriptural and profane opinions, concerning the fundamentals of our divine religion, it seems, indeed, not only suitable, but an incumbent duty, in all appropriate modes, to contend for the true faith, "delivered to the Saints," of old, and to exhibit in their scriptural purity, the essential doctrines of the gospel plan for man's salvation. In this way, such erroneous and destructive opinions, may, in

some measure, be exposed and restrained; and their extension, and pernicious influence, limited. Moreover, with reference to the Series of Discourses, on the principal doctrines and duties of our divine religion, which the Writer proposes to publish, it seems requisite, that this sublime doctrine of a *plurality of persons*, in the *one Deity*, should be introduced, and scripturally explained, for it lies at the very foundation of true Christianity. Indeed, the Scriptures invite, and command us, to exercise the duty of studying, and ascertaining, in their storehouse of Sacred knowledge, the true nature and character of the glorious God, our Creator, Benefactor, and Saviour. There, we find it declared,—"Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace;" "This is life eternal, that they might *know* thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

With regard to reverent and appropriate enquiries, relative to the nature and attributes of the Divine Being, a very learned, and truly orthodox divine of a former age, in the English Church, has written as follows:—"Though we must forever despair, of *finding out the Almighty to perfection*, yet, we ought not, for this reason, to give over our disquisitions after him, since the pleasure and advantages wherewith they are rewarded, do more than compensate, for all the pains of our attention and researches. To meditate upon subjects which we cannot comprehend; and to enquire, even into the nature and attributes of God, himself, is far from being offensive to him, so long as our enquiries are tempered with humility, and a godly fear. We are not only allowed, but encouraged to make the *nature* of God, the subject of our contemplations." The same pious writer, in treating of the *Divine Trinity*, says, "This doctrine, is, as it were, the *Shibboleth* of the Christian Church, and that, wherein the professors of Christianity, are distinguished from all other worshippers in the world. And as it is the *peculiar*, so it is the great and fundamental doctrine of the Christian system, and that, which virtually comprises all the rest."

Plurality of Persons in the Deity.—"And God said, let us make man in *our* image after *our* likeness." Gen. i, 26.—

"And the Lord God, said, behold the man is become as one of *us*, to know good, and evil." Gen. iii, 22.——"And the Lord said, &c. Go to let *us* go down, and there confound their language." Gen. xi, 6, 7.——"Also, I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for *us?*" Is. vi, 8.—"For there are *three* that bear record in heaven,—the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost;* and these *three*, are *one*." 1 John v, 7.

The foregoing, with several other passages of Scripture, plainly show, that a *plurality of persons*, exist in the *one Deity*. No expressions, can, possibly, make this *plurality*, as well as *personal* and *perfect union*, in the *one* glorious Godhead, more plainly apparent, as a fact, or *truth*, than the words contained in the last of the passages, above cited. We are not required to scrutinize, and comprehend, the mystery of this Sacred Union, which cannot be done, by any created being, but it is our duty to believe it, as a truth, divinely revealed, in words of plain and positive meaning. It is an essential truth of our holy religion, and one, on which our faith should rely, with implicit confidence.

Let us now, with all becoming reverence, examine the declarations of Scripture, regarding each of the Sacred Persons, existing in that *one united Deity*.

Personality of the Divine Father.—"The Father loveth the Son." John iii, 35.——"As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John v, 21.——"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father." John v, 45.——"Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John vi, 45.—"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." John x, 15.——"That the world may know that I love the Father." John xiv, 31.——"All things that the Father hath are mine." John xvi, 15.——"Wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me." Acts i, 4.

These, and many other passages of the New Testament Scriptures, expressly show, that the "Father" is, by a *distinctive* name, *one* of the Sacred Persons, in that eternal and glorious Being, who is the Creator, and God of the Universe. It will be seen, that all these texts, have an exclusive reference, to his relation to his divine "Son;" and to the perfect

union in which they both subsist. In the language of some of these passages, separate relations, feelings, and acts, are attributed to *each* of the Sacred Persons, and in others, an *union* and a *community* of action, are as clearly shown. In some of them, the Father is said to love the Son, and in one of them, the love of the Son to the Father is mentioned. Now such language would be without any consistent meaning, and, (with reverence be it said)—quite absurd, if the Father and Son were not *distinct Persons*. Each *one*, is said to love the *other*. Again, the Father is said to *know* the Son, and the Son as fully to *know* the Father. Here, also, would be language without any reasonable or sensible meaning, if there were no such *personal distinction*, as the words plainly express. As there is an equality in *knowledge*, in these divine persons, as to each other, so there is the same equality as to *possession*, for in one of the passages, the Son, says,—"All things that the Father hath are mine." Here, personal and *separate possession* is mentioned, though, in reference to the divinely declared, but to us mysterious union in Deity, it is a *conjoint* and *indivisible* possession. In one of the passages, there is mentioned, a promise of "the Spirit," as given, and to be fulfilled by the Father, *only*, but, in several other places, the Son says, that *he* will send that divine Spirit, the Comforter; all which language, taken together, shows an *equality*, and *union* of *possession*, of *power*, and of *action*. Further, there are acts of power and goodness mentioned, as personally, and separately, performed by each. The Father is said to "quicken," and raise the dead, and the Son hath said, that he also "quickeneth whom he will." The distinction of persons, is also shown, in the cited passage, where the Son, (the Saviour), in arguing with the Jews, his opponents, declares, that he "will not accuse" them "to the Father." Again, similar separate conduct, or action, is seen, in the passage which says, "every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the *Father*, cometh unto me."

It is worthy of remark, that in the discussion which our Lord held with the Pharisees as related in John viii, he speaks, throughout, of the Father and himself as *two distinct persons*. Therefore, the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, as some have most erroneously imagined, though it is plain enough, that the completest *unity* and *equality* subsist between them. A sufficient portion of Scriptural truth has

now been given, to show that He who is thus called "the Father" is one of the *distinctive* persons, in the *one*, united, and glorious Deity.

THE DIVINE "SON," OR "WORD."—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the *Mighty God*, *the Everlasting Father*, the Prince of Peace." Is. ix, 6.——"But thou Bethlehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee, shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from *everlasting*." Micah v, 2.——"How say they, that Christ is David's Son? And David himself saith, in the book of Psalms, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, &c. David, therefore, calleth him Lord, how is he then his Son?" Luke xx, 41, 2, 4.—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him, was not any thing made, that was made."—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying; this was he, of whom I spake; He that cometh after me, is preferred before me, for He was before me." John i, 1, 2, 3, 14, 15.——"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "He spake of the temple of his body." John ii, 19, 21. (In connection with Acts ii, 32.—"This Jesus hath God raised up.")—"Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was I am." John viii, 58.—"I and my Father are one." John x, 30.—"And now O Father glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, *before the World was*." John xvii, 5.——"Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." Rom. ix, 5.—"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *equal* with God." Phil. ii, 6.—"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Col. i, 16.—"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom*, *also*, *he made the Worlds*." Heb. i, 2.—"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have look-

ed upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that *eternal* life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.") 1 John i, 1, 2.—— "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the *true God*, and *eternal life*." 1 John v, 20.——"To the only wise *God* our *Saviour*, be glory, and Majesty, dominion, and power, both now and for ever. Amen." Jude xxv.—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the *Almighty*." Rev. i, 8.——"I am the *Root* and the *Offspring* of David." Rev. xxii, 16.

In all these passages, the divine *personality* of the Lord Jesus Christ, is expressly shown; in some of them, under the name of "the Son," and of "the Word," in others. It is perfectly clear, that in both of these terms, the same Sacred Person is meant. Looking at the passage first cited, we see, that the inspired prophet, uses language, at the commencement, as referring to *two* Beings, and by the words immediately following they are considered as being united in one Person. There is,—the "Child born," which serves to designate the *human* nature of the Saviour; and the "Son given," as showing his *divine* Personality. This divine Being, mentioned in the singular number, is here called, the "Mighty God," and the "Everlasting Father." No stronger and plainer words could, possibly, be used, to mark his divine and eternal nature and character. They were recorded, by inspiration, upwards of 700 years before the human nature of the Saviour was formed and brought into the world. In the next mentioned prophetical passage, also, several hundreds of years before the appearance of the Saviour in the World, Bethlehem is named, as the place for the birth of his humanity, and the succeeding words "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," also evidently declare his pre-existing and divine nature. In the text, in Luke xx, the Saviour in referring to David, prophetically calling him Lord, intimates plainly enough, his own *divinity*, as though he had said,—how can I be considered merely the Son of David, according to the flesh, for he calls me, "Lord" and "my Lord," and this is language never used

by a Father to a Son; and, moreover, David evidently employed the word, with reference to a divine Person. The next cited and connected passages, in John i, are so perfectly explicit and plain, that without the utmost violation of the meaning of words, they cannot be held to have any other signification than that of the *divinity* of the Saviour, and of his eternal existence, as one of the *Persons* in the glorious Deity, by whom all creatures and things were formed. As if to make the truth of that divinity, the more apparent and conclusive, there are both affirmative, and negative terms employed. It is first said, "All things were made by him," and next, "Without him was not any thing made, that was made." And, then, in a subsequent verse, the union of this divine and eternal Being, with the human nature, is announced in the words,—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." No language could, possibly, make the distinction between the *two* natures, and their union in the *one* visible Person, more clearly apparent. No Arians, or Socinians, or other heretics and infidels, with all their profane ingenuity, can, in the mind of any person, not blinded by determined pride and prejudice, and aversion to plain scriptural truth, explain away, or alter the meaning, which the words employed, so fully convey, of the *divine* nature and *personality* of Him, who is here called, "the Word." In the same chapter, which contains the foregoing passages, is the testimony of the inspired John the Baptist, concerning the Saviour, declaring, "He was before me." These words, evidently refer to the Saviour's divinity, for in his human nature, he was younger than the Baptist, of which fact, the latter was fully aware. The words of the Saviour,—"destroy this temple, (meaning his body,) and in three days I will raise it up," convey, also, a proof of his *divinity*; for in Acts ii, it is said, "*God raised* him from the dead, on that "third day." From all this, we see, that the same person, is both Jesus the Christ, and God. His solemn and emphatic words,—"Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am" afford another most express proof of his divine *nature*, and *personality*. The words,—"I am," are the same which God revealed to Moses, as the appellation by which he was to make Him known to the Children of Israel. The words of the Saviour, in another cited passage,—"I and my Father are one," also fully show, both his *personality* and *divine* na-

ture, and his eternal and inseparable union with the Father The passage in Rom. ix, makes the distinction between the divine and human nature, in the person of the Saviour, by the words,—"Of whom as concerning the flesh, or *human* nature, Christ (the Anointed) came, and, then, by declaring as to the divine nature, "who is over all, God blessed for ever." The texts next cited, in Colossians, and Hebrews, declare of the Saviour, that "all things were created by him, and for him," which clearly show his *divinity*, for none but God, is, or can be, the Creator of all; and, moreover, it must be borne in mind, that the human nature of the Saviour, had no existence, until, by a divine power, it was conceived in the Virgin, and, consequently, that nature had nothing to do with the Creation "of all things," mentioned in the texts. In the cited passages, in John i, the Saviour is styled, the "Word of Life" and "that Eternal Life, which was from the beginning," and, "which was with the Father;" and further, he is called, "the true God and eternal life;" each, and all of which expressions, plainly denote his *divine* and *eternal* existence, and also his *personality*, as distinguished from the divine Father. In the passage in Jude, He is expressly called, "God our Saviour," which inspired language is, of itself, quite sufficient to prove his divine nature, and also Union in Deity.

In one of the cited texts, in "Revelation," the Saviour says of himself, that he is "the beginning and the ending, which is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty;" and in another place, says, that He is the "Root and the Offspring of David." All these expressions plainly denote his divine and personal existence. A *root*, we know, is the foundation of the tree, or that from which it springs forth, and on which its existence and support depends. Christ is the *root* of David, as to his *divine* nature, for from that nature, all the human race sprang, and as we have seen, he is declared to be the Creator "of all things," and that "without him, was not any thing made that was made." And he is the *Offspring* of David, as to his human nature, for he took that nature on him, of the stock of David. The Saviour calling himself, the "*Almighty*" is a proof of his divinity, the strongest that any words can, possibly, afford.—That title would be direct blasphemy, if applied to any other being, than the eternal and glorious God. In the passage in Rev. xix, it is said, "his Vesture is dipped in blood," and that,

his name is called the Word of God." Connect these sayings, with the texts in John Chap. i, which declare, that, "the Word was God" and that "all things were made by him" and that "the Word was made flesh" and, thus, also, we have the clearest testimony of the Saviour's *divinity*. Mention is made, in Scripture, of our Saviour, while on earth, being worshipped by his disciples, and others. He never objected or refused to receive such worship, or made the least intimation of its being improper, which it is certain he would have done, if he had not been, indeed, a divine person. This affords additional evidence of our Lord's divinity, for the Scriptures plainly declare, that none but the Divine Being is an object of worship. We, further, find, in Scripture, that on several occasions, Angels expressly forbid any worship being offered to them, saying,—"See thou do it not;" and one of them, adding, "Worship God," evidently meaning, that none but He should be worshipped.

From the numerous passages of Scripture which have here been commented on, as well as from others, which might be mentioned, it is perfectly evident, that our Lord and Saviour is a *Divine* Being; and of *personality*, as well as of *Union* of existence with the Divine Father; and, as presently will be shown, from Scripture, in union also, with the other divine Person, the Holy Spirit, in the *one* eternal and glorious Deity.

The Holy Ghost,—a Divine Person.—"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Math. iii, 11.——"Whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Mark xiii, 11.——"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv, 26.——"This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas." Acts i, 8.——"Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Acts v, 3, 4.——"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Acts vii, 51.——"And walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." Acts ix, 31.——"The Spirit said unto him, Arise, therefore, and get thee down, for I have sent them." Acts x, 19, 20.——"The Holy Ghost said, separate me Bar-

nabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." Acts xiii, 2.—"So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost." 4 v.——"And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia." &c. Acts xvi, 6.—"But the Spirit suffered them not." 7 v.——"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers." Acts xx, 28.——"Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Rom. xv, 16.——"And for the love of the Spirit." 30 v.——"Not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. ii, 13.——"Know ye not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. vi, 19.——"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." Eph. iv, 30.——"Having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." 1 Thess. i, 5.——"Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith." Heb. iii, 7.——"Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. i, 21.

The foregoing passages of Scripture, as well as many others, clearly show the *personality*, and *divine* nature of the Holy Spirit. In most of them, the language is so extremely plain, and pointed, that only the most profane ingenuity, and proud and hardened prejudice, would think of doubting as to its meaning, on those most sublime, and important particulars of religious knowledge. Let us, reverently, and briefly examine some of these sacred passages. In the first, the inspired Baptist, does not say of the Saviour "He will baptize you" with *himself*, or with the divine *Father*, but "with the *Holy Ghost*,"—another Spiritual Being. In the other passages cited, various *feelings*, *operations*, and *acts*, of a *personal* nature, and in language solely employed, in a *personal* manner, are mentioned, as originated by, and proceeding from, that divine Spirit. In some of them, the *love* of the Spirit, the *joy* and *comfort* of the Spirit, being *sanctified* by the Spirit, are mentioned, as being the effects of the personal presence, and influence of that holy and benevolent Being. In other places, He is mentioned, in *personal* language, as speaking of the things relating to the Church. The following passages are of that description.—"It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost;" "The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake;"—"Holy men of God, spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Again, this blessed Spirit is mentioned as a distinct person,

giving his own *personal* commands, and directions. He said to Peter,—"Go with them, for I have sent them:" and Peter says,—"the Spirit bade me go." Again, the Spirit said "Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them;" "and they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost." In one passage, He is said, *personally*, and of His *own authority*, to have made the "overseers" of the Church. On one occasion, the disciples were, by the Holy Ghost, in the same personal language, and manner, forbidden to preach the Gospel in a certain country; and on another occasion, they were about to go to a certain place, but, in like manner, "the Spirit suffered them not." In some of the cited passages, the Holy Spirit is *personally* mentioned, as a *Teacher*, instructing in the things of the divine kingdom, and the ways of righteousness. Accordingly, it is said,—"He shall teach you all things;" and further, as declared by an Apostle, "which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." There are, also, passages, mentioning the *dwelling* of the Holy Spirit, in true Christians, and solemn cautions against *grieving*, or *offending* him, and causing his departure; and awful declarations, and instances, of sins committed *more especially* against that Divine Person. On these points, the following cited passages, are express;—"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost,"—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God;"—"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost:"—"Why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost: thou hast not lied unto *men*, but unto *God*." In this last passage, both the *personality* and the *divine nature* of the Holy Spirit are expressly shown. In all of the cited passages, indeed, as well as in many others, in Scripture, the same Sacred doctrines, are plainly revealed for our belief, and instruction.

Coequality, and Unity, of the Three Divine Persons, in the One Eternal Deity.—*Coequality, &c.*—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii, 19.——"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." John v, 23.——"I and my Father are one." John x, 30.——"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." John xiv, 9.——"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion

of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." 2 Cor. xiii, 14.——"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *equal* with God." Phil. ii, 6——"Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Acts v, 3, 4.——"If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Rom. viii, 9.—"The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii, 11.——"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the *Eternal Spirit*, offered himself without spot to God," &c. Heb. ix, 14.

Unity, &c.—"And God said, let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." "So God created man, in *his* own image, in the image of God, created He him." Gen. i, 26, 27.—— "I will make him an help meet for him." Gen. ii, 18.—— "And God said unto Moses, *I Am That I Am*: and He said, thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, *I Am* hath sent me unto you." Exod. iii, 14.——"Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is *one* Lord. Deut. vi, 4.——(These words are cited by the Saviour. See Mark xii, 29.)—"As thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in *us*," &c. "That they may be *one* even as *we* are *one*." John xvii, 21, 22.——"*One God*, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. iv, 6.——"There are *three* that bear record in heaven,—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these *three* are *one*." 1 John v, 7.

In the preceding parts of this discourse, ample Scriptural proof has been given, to show the existence of *three* distinct persons, having *divine* attributes and authority. The sublime doctrinal truth, that these *three* sacred persons are united in *one* divine Essence, or eternal and glorious Deity, as plainly appears from the foregoing passages of Scripture. The co-equality, as to the attributes and perfections of the three divine Persons, is shown in the text, which commands the manner of introduction into the visible Church, and dedication to the Worship and Service of the true God, by the ordinance of baptism. We see, that this Ordinance is to be administered, in the name of the *three* divine persons,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without any intimation, as to *superiority*, or *inferiority*, among them. Had any one of them, been a created Being, or, in any respect, inferior to the others, doubtless, it would have been noticed, in some form of words, but the language is, that of perfect *equality*. Moreover, we can

readily see, that it would be impiety, or blasphemy, to suppose that in such a solemn act of dedication to the Deity, any created, or inferior being, would be conjoined with Him, as being entitled to equal worship and obedience. In another text, these words,—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," show the same *equality*, in all the three divine Persons. The Lord Jesus Christ, is even named first, and he is called,—"The Lord," which is one of the names, by which the Divine Being is frequently designated in Scripture. There is not a sentence in any part of the Scriptures, in which any created being, is named, or placed, in equality of conjunction, with the Deity. A supposition of the kind, would be directly impious. In one passage, we find the Saviour saying of Himself, "That all men should honour the Son, even (or *the same*) as they honour the Father;"—and again "I, and my Father, are one;" and further, it is said of him, He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God,"—meaning the Father. All of these expressions, show a perfect *equality*, between them; and one of the passages, expressly declares their perfect *Unity*.

Then, if we look at some of the texts relating to the Holy Ghost, we see, that He is called the "Spirit of God," and "the *eternal* Spirit," which words clearly show, both his *divine nature* and His perfect *equality* with the other sacred Persons, in the *one* Deity. The "Spirit of God" cannot, indeed, of necessity, be *other* or *less* than of perfect *equality* with *Him*, whose *Spirit* He is.

As to the *perfect*, but to finite beings, *mysterious* Union of the three sacred persons, in the one Godhead, or Deity, several of the texts cited, are equally express and conclusive. In the following cited passages, both a *plurality* and a *unity* in the Godhead, are shown,—"And God said let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." "So God created man, in *His* own image." And in these cited passages, the Divine Being is mentioned, in the *singular number*;—"I will make him an help-meet for him;"—"The Lord our God is *one* Lord;" and in the solemn words by the Lord, to Moses,—"I Am That I Am." All these, fully show, that there is but *one* Divine Being, or Deity. It would, indeed, be quite superfluous to multiply texts to show that sublime truth, for in many hundreds of passages of Scripture, the Deity is mentioned as *one*

Being, under the name of "God," or "Lord," or other appellation; and where the words, in the *singular* number, *He* and *Him* are applied.

The words of the cited passage, in 1st. John,—"And there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these *three* are *one*,"—are so pointed, and express, as to the perfect *equality* and *union* of the *three* persons, in the *one* Deity, that if there were no other Scripture on the subject, that text, alone, would be perfectly conclusive, to show the truth of that sublime doctrine. It seems, indeed, quite impossible to employ any words, which could express it more clearly and fully. The Epistle, in which the text is contained, was written by St. John, about the very latest date of the Sacred writings; and evidently appears to have been written,—as is generally allowed,—to refute the heresies which had so early appeared, respecting the doctrines, of,—a *Trinity* in *Unity*; and the *divinity* of the Saviour. These inspired testimonies, were sufficient to discredit and suppress those heresies for a long period, and, with all genuine Christians, have always, greatly assisted to preserve them, in the firm belief of these essential doctrines of our divine religion.

All who are truly zealous for the purity of the Christian faith, and the honour and glory of their God and Saviour, cannot but deplore, that there are still Sects, including large numbers, calling themselves Christians, who hold the dishonouring and ruinous heresies, directly opposed to the plain words of inspired truth, on these sacred subjects. Such persons, are now to be found, in nearly every place, in countries called *Christian*, and there is good reason to conclude, that there are some of them in this community. It is a common peculiarity of all kinds of heretical characters, that they are ever strenuously active to spread their destructive errors; and, therefore, it is constantly needful that in all suitable modes, the young, as well as all others, should be instructed and guarded both against *them*, and their *profane falsities*.

With regard to the mysterious nature of the sublime doctrines, which have here been treated of, this furnishes no objection whatever, as to their truth. The only point to be considered, regarding them, is this—Are they, or are they not, set forth in Scripture, as *truths*, in language, such as plainly conveys to the understanding, the knowledge that such truths

are there declared? As to the *mystery* involved in the revealed fact, of *three* divine Persons, being united in, and composing the *one Deity*, we are not required to comprehend it. The highest created intelligence, cannot possibly do it. If we believed nothing, as fact, or truth, but what we can fully comprehend, as to mode or manner of existence, or union of parts and qualities, we should believe little or nothing, as to numberless objects and things around us, which are visible to our senses, with which we are constantly conversant, and in which, as truths, we are deeply interested. On some of them, indeed, we are absolutely dependent for our natural existence. Why should our *finite* understanding, presume to comprehend that which is *infinite*, or to know all the real *differences* which are consistent with the *unity* of the Divine Nature, when, with all our search and labour, we are so little acquainted with the powers, operations, and productions, of the most common beings, that are daily and hourly before our eyes?

On this subject, a learned Divine, and a Philosopher too, has written as follows;—"You believe there is such a thing as *Light*, whether flowing from the Sun, or any other luminous body. But you cannot comprehend, either its nature, or the manner in which it flows. How do the rays of the Candle, instantly disperse into every corner of the room? Again, here are *three* Candles, yet there is but *one* light. Explain this, and I will explain the *Three-One God*. You believe there is such a thing as *Air*. It covers you, as a garment, but can you comprehend how? If we will not breathe it, till we can comprehend it, our life is very near its period. You believe there is such a thing as *Earth*. Here, you fix your foot upon it. You are supported by it. But, do you comprehend what it is, that supports the Earth? We know, that it is God that 'spreadeth the North over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.' This is the fact. But how? Who can account for this? You believe you have a *Soul*, connected with the house of clay. But, can you comprehend *how?* What are the ties that unite the heavenly flame, with the earthly clod? You understand just nothing of the matter. You, surely, believe you have a *Body*, together with your *Soul*, and that each is dependent on the other. Run only a thorn into your hand: immediately pain is felt in your Soul. On the other side, is shame felt in your Soul? Instantly a blush overspreads your cheek. These, also, are facts, which you

cannot deny, nor can you account for them. Those who will not believe any thing, but what they can *comprehend*, must not believe that there is a *Sun* in the firmament,—that there is *Light* shining around them,—that there is *Air*, though it encompasses them on every side;—that there is any *Earth*, though they stand upon it. They must not believe that they have a *Soul*, no, nor that they have a *Body*.

In requiring you to believe that,—'There are *Three* that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these *Three* are *One*;' You are not required to believe any *mystery*. The Bible barely requires you to believe such *facts*, not the *manner* of them. Now the mystery does not lie in the *fact*, but altogether in the *manner*. I believe just as much as God has revealed, and no more. But this, the *manner* he has not revealed; therefore I believe nothing about it. But would it not be absurd in me, to deny the *fact* because I do not understand the *manner*? That is, to reject what God *has revealed*, because I do not comprehend what he has *not revealed*.

Again, 'the Word was made flesh.' I believe this *fact* also; but, as to the *manner*, *how* he was made flesh,—wherein the *mystery* lies,—I know nothing about it, I believe nothing about it."

With reference to the attributes and perfections of the Divine Being, it will, only, be needful to mention them, here, in the words in which they are expressly declared in the Scriptures. Therein, it is said, that he is "*Almighty*;" that "Nothing is too hard for him;"—that "with God, all things are possible."

His "*Wisdom*" and "*Knowledge*," also, are declared to be equally unlimited. It is said,—"His understanding is infinite,"—that, "He knoweth the secrets of all hearts,"—that "all things are naked, and open, before the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do,"—and that, "He will bring every work into judgment, with every *secret* thing, whether it be *good*, or whether it be *evil*."

As to *Holiness*, He is declared to be "glorious in holiness," "holy in all His Works;" again, He says,—"Be ye holy for I am holy."

In reference to *Justice*, it is said, that, "He is a just God,"—that,—"just and right is He;"—that "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne;" with many other declarations of Scripture, to the same effect.

He is, also, equally infinite and perfect in *Love*. The Scriptures declare, in several places, that "God is love." There cannot be a stronger expression, to denote that gracious Attribute.

He is, also, repeatedly declared, in Scripture, to be "*merciful*," "*gracious*" and "*good;*"—"good to all," and "abundant in goodness;"—"plenteous in Mercy;"—"full of compassion, and gracious." He declares of Himself, that He "will *wait*, that he may be *gracious*." Also, He is "*faithful*" and "true"—"without variableness, or shadow of turning." It is further declared: that "though Heaven and Earth pass away," his "Word shall not pass away," and that all His "promises" in "Jesus Christ" are, "Yea, and in Him Amen."

Such, in brief, are the attributes, and perfections of that eternal and glorious Being, the God of the Universe, as he has graciously made himself known to us in that ample and perfect revelation, contained in the Sacred Scriptures. Let all, then, who are blessed with this precious gift, earnestly and constantly endeavour, by its safe and cheering light, to know more and more of Him, who is thus revealed to us, as our *Creator*, *Preserver*, *Benefactor* and *Redeemer;* and who will, hereafter, be our *Judge* for Eternity. And may all, with the like perseverance cherish a grateful remembrance of His love and beneficence; and of the infinite obligations they are under, to be unreservedly devoted to His Will and Service. Thus, will peace of mind, and the only true enjoyment here below be fully secured, and eternal glory and happiness hereafter; for He, who is Truth itself, has said, "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" and, again, "if ye love me keep my Commandments." For warning as well as encouragement, He says to every professed follower, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life." Amen. So may it be.

SERMON III.

THE HOLINESS OF GOD,

AND THE NATURAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN, SCRIPTURALLY CONTRASTED.

HOLINESS OF GOD.—"Who is like thee, glorious in holiness." Exod. xv, 11.—"Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." Levit. xi, 45.——"Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool, for he is holy." Ps. xcix, 5.——"The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Ps. cxlv, 17.——"Above it stood the Seraphims: and one cried unto another and said holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Is. vi, 33.——"And they rest not day and night, saying,—Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. iv, 8.

NATURAL DEPRAVITY, &c.—"The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Gen. viii, 21.——"They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Ps. lviii, 3.—"Yea, also, the heart of the sons of men is full of evil." Eccl. ix, 3.——"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" Jer. xvii, 9.——"As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners," &c. Rom. v, 19.——"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii, 7.——"And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. ii, 3.

These, and numerous others, of the same import, are the plain and awful declarations, of sacred and infallible truth, concerning these all-important subjects;—the *holiness* of God and the native *depravity* of man. Now, however diverse the opinions and belief regarding religion, yet all who are convinced that the Bible contains a divine revelation, will at once

admit, that we are bound to receive and obey all its instructions, both as to faith and practice. But, although, such persons will readily make that admission, yet, comparatively, how few of them, either diligently seek to obtain a right knowledge of the truths of that revelation: or treasure them up in their minds and hearts, and are influenced by them, in spirit and habitual conduct?

What a proof is this, among the many others, that Man is indeed by nature not only a sinful, but a reckless being, regardless of all his highest interests! In no particulars connected with religion, is his native blindness more deep and abiding, than in an utter ignorance of the *holiness* of the Divine Being; and an inability duly to perceive the innate and extreme *depravity* of his own unregenerate condition. Even when divinely enlightened, on these solemn subjects,—so intimately bearing on his conversion to God,—his knowledge of them, will comparatively still remain extremely limited. It is only when so enlightened, that he can, in any degree, apprehend them aright; and be led to experience their favourable influence. Unregenerate humanity, even in its highest intellectual capacity and attainments, so far from having any just conceptions concerning them, is, through pride, but the farther removed from a knowledge, or even perception of those essential elements of true religion. Thus the inspired declaration concerning that unrenewed nature, must ever apply;—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Let us adore a gracious God, who of his abounding benevolence, has provided, and offered us, fully adequate means for obtaining a sufficient and saving knowledge of Himself; and not only of our own naturally ignorant and helpless condition, as to spiritual renewal, but for our attainment of all the blessings of a full salvation. The sacred records contain, and offer for our reception, and confiding employment, all the knowledge and means requisite towards securing that happy and glorious result.

Among the various subjects of knowledge, contained in that infallible revelation, we are there sufficiently informed, both as to the *unchangeable holiness* of the Divine Character, and, also, of the *innate depravity* of man, and his natural alienation from God. As one proof of that depravity, Man, even when

favoured with that revelation, instead of implicitly receiving and obeying its decisions, is naturally induced to frame conceptions, and form standards of his own, concerning both of those *respective* characteristics of holiness and depravity. Here is the fatal mistake, which so many, even among professing Christians, commit; and which, in numerous instances, prevents a sound conversion: and produces the most ruinous results. How indispensably needful is it, therefore, that, dismissing all merely self dependence, we prayerfully and diligently search the records of truth, as well concerning those primary doctrines of *holiness* and *depravity*, as on all other points, of religious faith and duty.

In regard to the holiness of the Divine Majesty, it is true, the highest Angels can but comprehend it in an altogether inadequate degree, for "who by searching can find out God:" "Who can find out the Almighty to perfection?" Those pure and exalted beings, in celebrating his praise, fall prostrate before Him, and continually cry,—"Holy, holy, holy!" Surely, then, as we, who are blind and sinful creatures, can only conceive of that holiness in a far inferior degree, it well becomes us, in imitation of those Angelic hosts, devoutly to contemplate, and most humbly adore, this immaculate attribute, with every other perfection of the glorious Sovereign of the Universe. The passages at the head of this discourse, declaring his *holiness*, are but a few of the announcements in the sacred records, on that sublime and awful subject. While in this state of mental and moral imperfection, we can, with our best efforts, by contemplation *alone*, obtain but a very feeble conception of that holiness, or indeed of any other *perfection* of that eternal and incomprehensible Being. For obtaining the most correct and ample knowledge of His character, and of all his ways and requisitions, concerning us,—we must ever prayerfully, and with most submissive attention, examine the precious volume He has in mercy given us. There, we shall find numerous instances, in which that attribute of holiness has been displayed, under circumstances of the most awful descriptions.

Throughout the history of our rebellious World, similar proofs of that holiness, and of the divine hatred of sin, have, also, been frequently exhibited,—in the destructive pestilences and earthquakes,—the tempests, famines, and other desolating scourges, which have been sent to reclaim or punish our guilty race: and, further, in the diseases and sufferings of all

earthly creatures, and their universal doom to decay and death.

We learn from the inspired page, that so pure and inflexible is that holiness, that myriads, who were once holy and happy beings, dwelling in the immediate presence of the divine glory, were, by the *first* act of rebellion, cast out from that high estate, and became utterly bereaved of every holy and moral endowment: and transformed into spirits, filled with every malignant and hateful quality; and doomed to experience the never ending torments of the divine indignation. It was for the *one act* of direct disobedience to a divine prohibition, that our primeval parents fell from their first exalted and happy condition: and in consequence, they, and all the myriads of their posterity, down to the end of time, have been sentenced to the various diseases and afflictions which belong to humanity; and ultimately to a painful departure from life. By that act of disobedience the whole human race, became also as to their highest interests, blinded in all their mental faculties, and corrupt in all their moral powers, in their affections and desires, and all the other qualities of their spiritual being. In these two instances as to Angels and men, through a *first* sin are strikingly manifested, the inflexible holiness of the divine character; and the heinous and ruinous nature of every transgression of the will and commands of that righteous Being who "ruleth over all."

The universal deluge of waters, which destroyed all living creatures remaining on the earth,—the punishment of the guilty inhabitants of the Cities of the plain;—the blotting out of the corrupt nations of Amalek and Edom, Moab and Ammon:—the destruction of idolatrous and profligate Nineveh, and Babylon:—of proud and presumptuous Egypt;—of Tyre and Sidon, and of other corrupt Nations and Cities, as recorded in the inspired volume, all loudly testify to the holy character of the Almightly Ruler, and to his just indignation against every wilful and daring infringement of his righteous authority and laws.

Even in relation to his own chosen people, the descendants of the faithful Abraham, we see the same immutable holiness and equity exhibited, in the various inflictions upon them in the wilderness:—in the 40 years wandering in that dreary waste:—and in the whole of the numerous generation which came out of bondage, with only *two* exceptions, not being permitted to enter the promised land, but, for their repeated mur-

murings and rebellion, being cut off in that wilderness. In the subsequent history of the same chosen people, we find that righteous Being, manifesting the same holy character,—and his just indignation against all iniquity. We, there behold the signal displays of his holiness and justice,—in the numerous instances of his giving them over to the oppressions of the heathen nations around them;—in their Babylonish captivity of 70 years;—in their varied afflictions during those periods of oppression;—in the repeated desolations of their Country,—the double destruction of their sacred Temple, which they had so often defiled;—in their unparalleled sufferings, and the destruction of life, when their beautiful and beloved City was taken and destroyed by the Romans; and, finally, in their wide dispersion, and the execrations and cruelties which for so many Ages they have been compelled to experience. When such have been the punishments of a Nation, called to be the *peculiar* people of the Most High, and so highly favoured as they were, both as to temporal and spiritual blessings; what may not other wicked nations expect to experience, of severe judicial inflictions, under our present spiritual, and more highly favoured, and, therefore, more responsible system? Well does it become all, who are placed under the light and mercies of this Dispensation, to bear constantly in mind, and obey, the solemn injunctions, to "stand in awe and sin not;"—to "cease to do evil and learn to do well." Thus, alone, can they safely expect to escape the just retributions of Him, "who changeth not."

But far above, and beyond all other manifestations of the holiness of the Divine Being, is that mysterious instance, of the gift of his holy and beloved Son, to a life of humiliation and deep and varied afflictions, in this rebellious world;—in his agonies of soul and body, and death upon the cross, to atone for the sins of our guilty race, and thereby make it possible for infinite holiness and justice, to extend to us pardon and every other needful grace; and finally, if having been faithful and obedient, to bestow upon us the blessings and glories of the everlasting inheritance.

Having, thus, though with great imperfection, exhibited some of the manifestations of the divine holiness, attention, may, next, in the way of *contrast*, be directed to the nature and conduct of fallen and unregenerate Man. And, here, also, for a true estimate of his native character, we must in the

very first instance, look at the descriptions of Him, which are given in the pages of inspired truth. Then, let us view his history, as recorded there, and, next, bring under notice some of the other extensive and leading events which have ever marked that history, as one either of open apostacy, or of disobedience to the authority and commands of God, and of wickedness in every imaginable form. The Lord is called, and is, indeed, the unerring "Searcher of hearts." His Word declares, that, "all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do;"—that he "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men," and, even "understandeth the thoughts afar off." Thus, knowing us altogether, He has declared, that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;"—that, naturally,—"there is none righteous, no not one;"—but all are by nature, "dead in trespasses and sins," and, therefore, "children of wrath." What alarming and humbling descriptions are here! And let it be remembered, that they are set before us for our admonition and warning by that just and Almighty Being, who has declared that He will "render to all according to their works;"—to the wicked "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." In the same records of truth, we behold the almost innumerable proofs of that innate depravity of Man,—in the ever prevalent idolatries, and profaneness, the licentiousness, and various other abominations of nearly the whole of our race. Also, in the constant wars, and bloodshed; and the devastations, cruelties and oppressions of nations towards each other; even frequently among that chosen people of Israel, on whom the Lord had bestowed so many exalted privileges and blessings. In the pages of secular history, we also find exhibited, through every age, and in every portion of our world, similar scenes of carnage and desolation, and of oppressions and cruelties, the most revolting to every pure principle, and benevolent feeling. And these cruel exhibitions, have not been confined to idolatrous regions, but they have ever prevailed, in nearly an equal degree, in those nations which have long been favoured with the light of a spiritual and perfect revelation; and have professed to know and to serve, its holy and benevolent Author.

Even in the lives of several of the specially favoured, and generally faithful Servants of the Lord, as recorded in the Sa-

cred Volume, we see some deplorable instances, in proof of Man's innate propensity to evil. There, we read of the transgressions of a Lot, described in general, as a "righteous" character;—of the sin of an Aaron, the High Priest of a divinely chosen people;—of the double crimes of the highly gifted and pious Psalmist;—of the apostasy of him, who was so highly endowed, as to be declared to be the wisest of men, and yet fell into idolatries and sensuality, the most gross and degrading; and who, there is reason to fear, died with their guilt remaining on him. There, also, are impartially recorded, the offence of a pious and generally faithful Hezekiah, the fatal rashness of a devout and zealous Josiah, the conduct of a Jonah, who, at first, refused to fulfil a specially commanded duty of his most responsible prophetic office. Lastly, we are informed of one, who under our most spiritual dispensation, and in the immediate presence of his Lord and Saviour, with profane asseverations, denied that he knew him, or was one of his disciples. What alarming proofs do these instances afford, of the natural evil of Man, and of his unfaithfulness as to allegiance and duty to his God? Hence, how needful for all of the professed Servants of the Lord, ever to bear in mind, and obey, the inspired injunction,—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

But, further, if we take but a general view of separate communities, in civil society, in the *present day*, and in professedly *Christian* lands, and examine through the various ranks and classes, and observe their different avocations and employments; and look into family circles, and mark the conduct of the great body of individuals among whom we move; we shall find, in every quarter, abundant and deplorable proofs of the same innate vicious propensities of native humanity. Among them all, natural evil qualities, in some, or many forms, are being frequently shown, in the external conduct, for, as wisdom, has declared "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit," but ever "bringeth forth evil fruit." In general society we see to more or less extent, in nearly every direction, in political and other affairs, alienations, strifes, and injustice, through pride, ambition, envy, or some other corrupt quality; also the *strong drink system* of crime, wretchedness, and ruin;—and to complete the dark and hateful picture, in not a few Countries called Christian, the abomination of *Slavery*, that "sum of all human villanies" as it

has been most fitly termed. These, and all similar exhibitions of evil, are traceable to the same corrupt root of *native selfishness*. In the family relations, how frquently are found, either strifes and bitter aversions, or coldness and distance, evil speakings, and failure of the kindly charities;—the neglect of due parental restraint and instruction; and the youthful disregard of advice and authority. These, and the many other evils in the kindred relations, fully manifest the truth of the inspired declarations,—of a destitution, or defect, of even "natural affection," in the unregenerate heart.

Again, if we come down to individual conduct, to say nothing of the more openly vicious and violent, how much fraud and deceit, secret or open dishonesty, treachery, falsehood, and slander, are being constantly practised;—how many corrupt, and corrupting occupations, for the sake of worldly gain;—how much intemperance, and other modes of sensuality are prevalent, and of dissipation, extravagance, and waste, in reference to the ordinary bounties of a gracious Providence? All these, and the countless other exhibitions of moral evil, fully correspond with the scriptural character of man, that he is by nature depraved; immeasurably distant from a God of infinite purity, and from the ways of truth and righteousness.

Under such views and evidences of the divine *holiness*, and of native human *depravity*, and its abounding fruits, the scriptural question applies,—"How can two walk together except they be agreed?" And the still more solemn and all important enquiry, in the same inspired quarter;—"How shall man be just with God?" How shall he become restored to the divine image and favour, and escape the fulfilment of the revealed decree of eternally painful retributions in the case of every soul that departs from life in an unregenerate state?

It is plainly evident, even to reason alone, that before there can be any such reconciliation and harmony, between this holy and just God, and sinful man, there must, of necessity, take place, on the one part or the other, some very great change of character. We are fully assured, it cannot be in Him, who has Himself declared, that "He changeth not;" and of whom, in the inspired Word, it is said, that, "He is glorious in holiness," and "without any variableness, or shadow of turning." But, further, and what should fill every unregenerate soul with the deepest alarm, that holy and Almighty Being, has re-

peatedly declared in his irrevocable Word, that he "will bring every work into judgment," whether "good or evil;"—will "judge the World in righteousness and truth;" and will "turn the wicked into hell," where shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that never shall be quenched."

What, then, is to be done, to avert that wrath, and those tremendous consequences of sin? Divine revelation alone can disclose,—and blessed be its benevolent Author, it has plainly and fully informed us,—how that essential reconciliation must, if at all, be brought to pass. The indispensable change must take place in the character of *man*, and in his relation to God. But, of the true nature and extent of this change, man, while in his natural state, is altogether ignorant. This blindness is a part, and often, indeed, a ruinous one, of his native fallen condition. While in this state, he is prone to judge of the Divine Being, according to some false standard of his own devising. Thus, the revealed charge lies fully against him;—"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself."

This requisite change in man, must be so thorough, that it is described in the inspired pages, under the expressive figures of,—a "new birth;" "new creatures;" and, again, "born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;" and through the operation and influence of the "Holy Spirit." These solemn announcements, not only reveal and enforce, the absolute necessity of such an entire change of character and relation, but they further show, the utter inability of man, of himself, to produce it; and his need, for that purpose, of the constant exercise of a supernatural and Almighty power. Hence, the inspired declaration, that "no man hath quickened his own soul." Neither, when so divinely quickened, can he, of himself, maintain its spiritual and regenerate life; for as the Saviour said to his immediate disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." But, further, the righteous Lord has declared, that his "Spirit shall not always strive with Man;" and that "he, who being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." What madness and presumption is it, then, for sinful and helpless man, to refuse, or delay, for a moment, to seek to that gracious as well as holy Being, for that essential change, on which his exemption

from eternal misery, and his safety and happiness, here, and hereafter, so entirely depend.

Thou unregenerate man, whosoever thou art, be exhorted to begin, immediately, to escape for thy life, by solemnly pondering on thy evil ways,—by repenting and instantly turning from them, and by earnest and persevering supplication, turning unto a justly offended God, in the revealed methods of his own appointment. Attend to the inspired warning,—"Beware lest he take thee away with a stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." No longer let thy deceitful heart, and thy sensual propensities, deceive and soothe thee, in concluding that it is time enough yet to repent, and seek salvation; and that at some future and "more convenient season," the requisite change may be sought and obtained. Let these solemn inspired commands and warnings, deeply sink into thy unregenerate soul,—"Acquaint *now* thyself with Him and be at peace;"—"Seek the Lord while He may be found;" for, "How shall we escape, if we *neglect* so great salvation?" For dispelling this procrastinating delusion, as to a future repentance, and turning unto God, hear what the scriptures declare;—that genuine repentance itself, is "the gift of God;" and that he often leaves a wilful and persevering sinner, to a "seared conscience,"—a "hardened and impenitent heart,"—and a "reprobate mind." He may say of thee, sinner, as He did of impenitent Ephraim of old;—"he is joined to his idols, let him alone." Let the Holy Spirit, and a divine Providence leave thee to thyself, and thou art undone forever. But, such as are convinced, that in order to future safety and happiness, that thorough spiritual change is indeed indispensable, must beware, that they rest not satisfied,—as vast numbers unhappily do,—with a mere improvement as to moral behaviour; and the regular observance of the outward forms and particulars of religious worship and duty. These, even when rightly performed are, comparatively, but a subordinate and inferior part of that essential change. In truth, unless they proceed from a spiritual renewal, they cannot be said to form any constituent part of that real transformation of character, which is divinely required. The resting in such a mere external reformation, is one of the proofs of the natural deceitfulness of the human heart. The indispensable change, must commence with a divine influence, on the inward powers and faculties.

Through that influence, the mind must be enlightened, the natural conscience awakened, and the heart duly affected. By these supernatural operations, must first be implanted, and spring forth, the desires, and dispositions, the affections and motives, which alone can produce an external conduct, in harmony with that inward renewal: and consequently acceptable and truly pleasing to Him, who judges, and truly estimates the motives of actions.

But, although, such is the necessity for a divine influence, in order to effect that inward change, let none be induced to delay seeking it, under the false and delusive idea, that nothing on their part, can, or is to be done, but that they are to remain passive until that influence is overpoweringly brought to bear upon them. Through this unscriptural and irrational sentiment, thousands have remained through life, in their native depravity, and actual transgressions, and have been eternally ruined. The same inspiration which has revealed the necessity of that spiritual influence, has with equal clearness, and even greater frequency, imperatively inculcated the duty, of the sinner to break off immediately from his outward transgressions, and to seek by earnest supplication to the "Father of lights" and "Giver of every good and perfect gift" for that illumination and grace, which are so freely offered to all, who perseveringly strive to secure them.

Another, and frequent delusion, under which vast numbers remain, and by which they are ruined, is, that,—of resting on an idea, or supposition, altogether unauthorized by Scripture, that of the mere *mercy* of God, independent of his *holiness* and *justice*, they will be forgiven; and that somehow, or other, all will be well with them at last. These, have either not scripturally learned, or have forgotten, that He with whom they have to do, has declared in His Word, that He is a "just God" as well as "a Saviour;" "holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works;" and that "He will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with his truth." Of his own spontaneous compassion and grace, he has devised, and revealed the one, and only plan, by which consistently with all His glorious perfections He will grant us His pardoning mercy and favour;—a meetness for His holy kingdom;—and finally, an habitation there. All such, and similar *self deceivers*, have never been brought to see, that the spiritual

change, revelation describes and requires, is essentially requisite, in order to *qualify* for the holy exercises, the love, the harmony, and all the other constituent elements of the happiness and glory of those, who gain admission to the presence of ineffable holiness, and to the fellowship of the pure spirits, who dwell in the abodes of everlasting bliss. Were it possible, that spirits, not fully sanctified, could enter there, they would still remain unhappy. For them, it would be no congenial place; and they would at once disturb the harmony, and sully the character of those blessed abodes. Under this view, also, is manifested, the necessity for the thorough spiritual renewal, which infallible revelation, as well as sound reason, and the essential fitness of things, so clearly require.

Let none, on reading these lines, turn off with indifference, and think, or say, all these are mere *truisms*,—the ordinary topics of religious discourses,—which, from time to time, we have heard from the pulpit, and in other modes, let us be told of things, connected with religion, of some *new* and *exciting* descriptions, which, therefore, may more readily secure our attention; and afford us pleasing information. The writer is well aware, that such is a very prevalent feeling among religious professors, in the present day; and it may be more than feared, that in public ministrations, the endeavour is more frequently made, to gratify that craving desire for the announcement of conceptions and disquisitions *novel* and *exciting*, rather than boldly and faithfully to declare those sacred truths, which will produce *alarm*, and arouse feelings of painful apprehension.

Let the plain scriptural truths which have, here, been set forth, be called *truisms*, and, undoubtedly, such they are; but, reader, if you have frequently read or heard of them, and they have hitherto failed so to affect you, as to lead to the needful spiritual change, your folly and guilt, are only so much the greater, and, if you so remain, your condemnation and future punishment, will, justly, be the more severe. Instead of lightly regarding, and any longer neglecting the solemn subjects which have been here set before you, let it be your immediate employment, to examine yourself by the light of conscience, but, most especially, by that of the inspired Word, to ascertain to a certainty, if that inward spiritual change has

indeed passed upon you. If it has not, that infallible Word declares, that as to salvation, you are, indeed, "without God and without hope;"—still in the native "gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity." Remaining in that state, so far from attaining happiness in the eternal World, into which you may at any moment be called, you must "lie down in sorrow," having your portion forever in the regions of anguish and despair.

Think not, and care not, who he is, that has set these sacred truths, and these arguments and exhortations, before you. He is, naturally, a sinful and fallible mortal like yourself. No longer be satisfied to live at such a dangerous venture, but rather call to mind continually, these awful and immutable words, of that just and holy Being, who will decree your final doom,—"Prepare to meet thy God;" for, "unless a man be born again of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God;" "he cannot enter therein." Begin, then, at once, most earnestly to pray and strive, to obtain that thorough renewal of heart and life, and persevere, until it becomes your happy experience; and you are thereby prepared for admission into the mansions of the heavenly inheritance, where "is fulness of joy," and at that "right hand," where are "pleasures for evermore."

SERMON IV.

DIVINE PLAN AND METHODS,

FOR THE SPIRITUAL RENEWAL, AND SALVATION OF MAN.

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1. Love of God.—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 16.——"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Eph. ii, 4, 5.——"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" 1 John iii, 1.——"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv, 10.

Our first parents, by the wilful violation of a divine command, directly and plainly given to them, as a test of loyalty and obedience, lost, as inspired revelation informs us, that divine image and favour, in which they stood when created. But, although, they could thus, by their voluntary act, forfeit and lose their first holy and happy state, they had no power or means of their own, to regain it. They had rebelled against the authority, and violated the law of an eternal and holy Sovereign, and his attribute of justice, required their immediate and eternal punishment. It is true, their sin, under all the particulars of temptation attending it, was not, in degree, so heinous and aggravated, as that of the Angels of light who rebelled. One of the guilty parties, was deceived by the subtle and malignant leader of that rebellious host; and the other, though not so deceived, was equally culpable. How far, if at all, the seducing circumstances attending the com-

mission of the offence, influenced the divine benevolence, to forbear immediately inflicting eternal punishment, we do not know, for *revelation* affords no knowledge on the point. We may, however, with humble diffidence, venture to conclude, that perfect equity would not permit the propagation of the race, under a universal doom to eternal misery. It rested, alone, with Him who is of infinite wisdom and goodness, to provide some method for averting that awful result, and by which, all the attributes of the divine character might be most illustriously magnified and displayed, and man be restored to the lost image and favour. The glorious plan of that salvation, has, through the inherent love and benevolence of God, been devised, and, on his part, fully accomplished; and that love has plainly declared it, in the ample and unchangeable revelation He has given us. There was nothing within the power of man, after his transgression, by which he could recommend himself to the divine acceptance, and regain the forfeited happiness. It was merely *love*, giving rise to pity and mercy, which could move that glorious Being, to form and execute that restoring plan; for as one of the scriptures at the head of this discourse declares,—"Herein, is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us;"—and further,—"He commendeth his love toward us." Other Scriptures, indeed, declare, that, "He is angry with the wicked, every day," and that,—"Salvation is far from them;" yet, from pity and mercy conjoined, springing from the same fountain of love, He does not immediately cut the transgressors down, but, often, spares them through lengthened periods, to afford them time and means for repentance. He has declared, that He takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live;" that He is "not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance." It was pity, arising from the same source, which drew from the benevolent Saviour, the tears which he shed, and his compassionate address, over that guilty people, who, He knew, were just about to fill up the measure of their wickedness, by putting Him to a most humiliating and agonizing death. The same love and pity, moved Him to direct his disciples, to convey to the inhabitants of the blood stained City, the first offers of gospel mercy. Throughout, the history of that specially chosen, but constantly rebellious people, that

love and mercy never entirely forsook them; but as His Word declares, "the Angel of his presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he, redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." Thus, we see, both from the numerous express declarations of Scripture, and the divine dispensations that God has ever been loving and merciful, towards our rebellious and guilty race.

We may, now, pass on, to view the precious and sure foundation of the divine plan, for reconciliation between rebellious man, and his Creator and Sovereign; and for effecting the promised restoration of the image and happiness, lost by the original transgression. The passages of Sacred Writ, given at the head of the following section, plainly reveal that costly and all sufficient foundation. They, further show, that guilty man may be pardoned, and spiritually renewed; and, even, more than regain the bliss of the forfeited inheritance, while all the glorious perfections of Deity, shall remain, not only untarnished, but be gloriously displayed before all intelligent Creation.

2. Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.—"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." Is. liii, 5, 6, 10.——"The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the World." John vi, 51.——"To feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with his own blood." Acts xx, 28.——"Who gave himself for our sins." Gal. i, 4.——"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. i, 14.——"Who his own self, bare our sins, in his own body on the tree: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Pet. ii, 24.——And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but, also, for the sins of the *whole world*." 1 John ii, 2.

While, as we have seen, the love and pity of the Divine Being, induced him to devise the plan of saving our race, from the eternally painful consequences of the first transgression, his equally glorious attributes of holiness and justice, required to be honored and vindicated. How these several perfections could be made to harmonize in man's salvation, no finite mind

could conceive. Infinite wisdom, alone, could devise and accomplish the measure. A mere act of *pity* and *mercy*, entirely independent of *holiness* and *justice*, would, indeed, have tarnished these last mentioned perfections. The supposition may not be improper, that such an act might have led the rebellious Angels to conclude, that forgiveness, on some prescribed conditions, might have been decreed, and extended to them; and that they had been dealt with, in over severity, in having been sentenced to everlasting reprobation and punishment. And, further, it seems manifest, that such a mere independent and irrespective exercise of mercy, would have held forth the most dangerous and pernicious example to all other orders of intellectual beings, who were standing in dutiful allegiance. The divine justice and holiness, had to be vindicated, and satisfied, and remain unsullied, before the whole of moral creation. These glorious attributes, with love and mercy, and all the other perfections of Deity, have, through infinite wisdom, been preserved in harmonious union, and most illustriously displayed, in the revealed plan for the redemption and salvation of man. As the Scriptures declare;—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And the Son, freely, "gave himself for our sins," agonized in soul for us, "was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," and "died, the just for the unjust to bring us unto God."

However scepticism may doubt, or infidelity deny, there are no modes or expressions of language, which can make any fact or truth more clearly manifest, than the sublime and consoling doctrine of the atonement, on our behalf, by our Lord Jesus Christ, as declared in numerous passages of the sacred volume. The texts cited above, are only a few, relating to that glorious and cheering subject. Let them be attentively pondered, without any sceptical bias, and, surely, none will fail to perceive, not only the *truth* but the *grace* and moral beauty they exhibit. Here, let us consider, who was the gracious Personage, who made that atonement.

Although heretical Arians and Socinians, perverted from the truth, through pride, and unscriptural reasonings, may deny to the Saviour his *divine* nature and attributes, there is no doctrine more clearly revealed in the records of sacred

truth. In the prophecy of the inspired Isaiah, Chap. ix, he is called "the *mighty God*, the *everlasting* Father, the Prince of Peace." The following connected passages of Scripture, might, alone, suffice, contained in Chap. i, of the gospel by John;—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Can language, possibly, declare any two facts more clearly than these cited passages show, that our Redeemer, is, indeed, one of the persons in the eternal and glorious Godhead; and that he took into his Deity, the nature of man, in the most intimate but mysterious Union? Neither Arians, or Socinians, in any age, with all their profane ingenuity, have, been able to explain away, or to shake, this inspired and clear testimony, to the *divine* nature of our gracious Redeemer. For further infallible evidence on the point, look at this passage in Phil. ii, 6, 7,—"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Also may be cited, this passage in John xvii, 5. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee, *before* the World *was*." Throughout this chapter, the relation between the two divine persons,—the Father and the Son,—is kept in view, and treated of; and the Son,—the Saviour,—mentions the glory which he had with the Father, *before* the Creation of the World. Now, our Lord had no existence in his human nature, until he was conceived in the Virgin by the "overshadowing" and "power" of the Holy Spirit, as was previously announced to her by the Angel. From all this, it is clearly manifest, that the *glory* which the Saviour referred to, was *that* of his divine and eternal Being. Lastly, may be cited, the Scripture contained in Heb. ii, 16,—"For, verily, he took not on him the nature of Angels, but he took on him, the seed of Abraham." Here, a Being is spoken of, as taking another nature upon him, and into union with him. This, of course, shows the previous existence of that Being, which so took another into Union. Who, then, was that previous Being; and what was his nature, and character? He was not an Angel, of any degree, for, it is said,—"he took

not on him, the nature of Angels." To say, that an Angel *took* upon him, the nature of an Angel, would, indeed, be language simply absurd. There would be the same absurdity, in saying that a man, *took* upon him the nature of man. There is indeed no Being, to whom that inspired testimony of previous personal existence can apply, but the one, divine, and glorious Personage, even the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Well, then, might the inspired Apostle, exclaim,—"Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." So intimate, indeed, is that union, that in Acts xx, it is said,—"God hath purchased the Church, with his own blood;" and, in another place, "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily."

It would seem that as both of the component parts of Man,—soul, and body,—had acted in the first transgression, there was, therefore, a *congruity*, and fit correspondence, in both enduring anguish, in that atoning work of justice and mercy. Accordingly, as declared by the evangelical prophet, hundreds of years before the event,—"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," and as the Saviour himself, when voluntarily offering that Soul, on our behalf, exclaimed "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death,"—the human spirit of the gracious Redeemer, suffered, and in union with and sustained by his Divinity made that precious atonement. His body, also, was pierced, and lingered in agony, on the tree, in completing the same gracious Work, of reconciliation. This awful event fulfilled, the long previous prophetical words,—"He was wounded for our transgressions," "the chastisement of our peace was upon him;" a prediction, in perfect accordance with the testimony of an inspired Apostle, where he says,—"Who, his own self, bare our sins, in his own body on the tree;" "by whose stripes ye were healed." Thus was conceived, and accomplished, that reconciling mystery of our redemption, which "the Angels desire to look into," but which, even, these exalted intelligences, can never fully comprehend. Wonder, indeed, O Heavens, and be astonished, as well as rejoice, O Earth, that God thus became Man, and in our form and nature, died to atone for the sins of His rebellious creatures; and not only to save them from endless misery, but to exalt them to everlasting glory and happiness.

Through that infinitely wise and gracious plan, thus be-

nignly accomplished, in harmony with all the divine perfections, God can now, as declared in His Word,—"be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." The first Adam sinned, and, thereby, he, and all the race, contained in him, as a federal head, fell from the original image of righteousness, and consequently, from happiness; and became liable to death and misery. The Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, has made the atonement for Man, to his offended God, and laid his reconciling "hand upon both." He has become the resurrection and the life, and brought the light of a glorious immortality, fully before us, in the revealed gospel of his grace. A cordial and confiding faith, however, on our part, in the whole of this merciful plan, is essential, in order to our partaking of its precious and exalted blessings.

Here, therefore, may be appropriately set forth, and examined, on scriptural authority, this leading doctrine of our,—

3. Justification by Faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ.—"He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life." John iii, 16.——"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." Acts x, 43.——"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." Rom. iii, 24, 5.——"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. iv, 25.——"Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath, through him." Rom. v, 9.——"God, was, in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. v, 19.——"By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast." Eph. ii, 8, 9.——"Wherefore, also, we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling; and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith, with power." 2 Thes. i, 12.

Our Lord has declared, as a condition of salvation,—"If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins;" John viii, 24. And again—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii, 36.

Many other passages of Scripture give the most solemn announcements and warnings, to the same effect. This all important, and gracious doctrine, is, indeed, revealed to us in terms so precise and plain, that, to use scriptural language, "he who runs may read," and "the wayfaring men though fools, shall not err therein." This faith, itself, however, or rather the power to exercise it savingly, requires a divine influence, as will be seen in the two last cited texts, at the head of this section; and in other Scripture passages. A mere intellectual belief, derived from scriptural and secular history, that such a person as Jesus Christ appeared in our world, and performed the miracles and other acts recorded of him, will not suffice, for obtaining that divine justification and pardon of sin. It must, as the Scriptures declare, be a belief, "with the heart unto righteousness," a "faith, which worketh by love." This divinely prompted and justifying faith, is ever preceded, in a greater or lesser degree, by a consciousness of sin; and a need of the divine mercy, and forgiveness, for as the Saviour declared—"they that are whole, have no need of the physician, but they that are sick." The power to exercise this justifying faith,—as in the case of every other needed blessing,—our gracious God and Saviour, is ever willing to bestow, on all who sincerely and earnestly seek to obtain it.

We see, then, that it is not by any works of our own, not even, when prompted and performed through a divine influence, that we can be pardoned, and stand justified before God. Our Saviour has told us,—"when ye shall have done all things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." But, none of our fallen race, have been thus obedient. It is, only, as the sacred Oracles plainly declare, through the infinite merit of the righteousness, and atoning sacrifice of the immaculate Redeemer, and through the exercise of a cordial faith in his meritorious work, and an exclusive reliance upon Him, that any can be pardoned and justified, and obtain the divine acceptance and favour. Thus, a holy and righteous God, can still remain *just* while He is "the justifier of the ungodly," who thus believe in His Son.

Reader, if conscience and reflection tell you, that you have never yet, by the witness of the Divine Spirit with your spirit,

experienced that justifying, loving faith in the Redeemer, lose not another moment, in neglect of the inestimable blessing. Seek with persevering anxiety and diligence, until you receive from "the Giver of every good and perfect gift," the grace and power truly to repent of your sins, and to turn from them, and to exercise that genuine faith; and *obediently* and *strenuously* put it forth for the saving of your soul. You are commanded and encouraged to do so, by the many gracious promises of the immutable Word. Rely thereon, and the blessings will be yours, for "He is faithful who has promised." How gracious is our God! He has not only exhorted and encouraged us to exercise this justifying faith, but he has *commanded* us to do it, for it is written,—"this is His Commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." The time is short, and the night of death cometh "when no man can work." We are faithfully warned, that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave." It will soon open for each of us; and, then, "as the tree has fallen so it will lie." The unchangeable and infallible Judge has told us, that He will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." In reference to that season of awful and righteous scrutiny, He has said, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." "Behold I come quickly."

4. Holy Scriptures.—"Wherewithal, shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy Word." Psalm cxix, 9.——"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm, cxix, 105.——"Search the Scriptures, &c." John v, 39.——"Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Eph. vi, 17.——"From a child, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii, 15, 16, 17.——"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Pet. i, 23

To divine revelation, alone, must we look, for all the knowledge we require, or can gain, regarding our present and eternal salvation. On every particular, both doctrinal and practical, of this momentous subject, no principles or opinions, not plainly founded on this perfect standard, and in accordance with the teachings it contains, are to be believed and adopted. Unlike mere human and secular science, which may be derived from experience, or through other means, the knowledge of the various subjects comprehended in the true religion, can, only, be drawn from a single source;—that of the one Code of revelation, which infinite wisdom and truth has given. All human reasonings and conclusions, independent of this *inspired original*, are uncertain, or illusory, and should be carefully avoided, by the searcher for the truths which concern his eternal interests. Such independent reasonings, founded in pride, and the speculations they engender, have given rise to the almost countless heresies, and erroneous and profane opinions, and practices, which from time to time have come forth, to disfigure the harmonious and beautiful system of revealed truth. They, often, terminate in what the Scriptures describe, as "the very depths of Satan." As regards that complete and infallible revelation, none are permitted to *add* or *diminish*. These express commands of its Sovereign Author, are to be implicitly received and obeyed,—"Add thou not unto his Words lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar;"—"To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

But, even, possessing this inestimable treasure of divine revelation, it will, on many points, as to its inward or spiritual meaning, be, as a *fountain* sealed, until smitten and opened by the power that formed it; or as a dark and seemingly vacant *cavern*, until the beams of eternal light, are brought to bear upon the naturally dark understanding, and make that truth effectual, for the conviction and conversion of the soul. The inspired Word declares, that, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And, again, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath *shined* in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." The divine Spirit employs his own

Word, as a sword to arouse and convict the conscience, and "takes of the things of God," as revealed in the Word, and, by his enlightening beams, shows them to the rational understanding, and effectually applies them to the conscience and the heart. Thus, is the natural man, to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." But, how, is he to obtain this essential spiritual light to shine upon the Word, and convey it to his soul, with the requisite convincing and saving power? Surely, reason alone may tell him, that it is not to be obtained by a neglect of the attentive perusal of the sacred records. The Being of infinite wisdom and benevolence, that gave them, says;—"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors;"—"Search the Scriptures;"—"Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go, keep her, for she is thy life." But, further, this spiritual enlightenment and instruction in the Word, must, like as to every other grace, be sought by sincere and fervent prayer, to the Source of all light and life. The example of the pious psalmist must be followed, who earnestly entreated.—"Show me the way of life;" "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law;"—"Make me to understand the way of thy precepts," and "my lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes." Above all, there must be an implicit obedience, to all the teachings of that Word, both as to doctrine and practice. Here, again, the example of that same devoted Servant of God must be taken, who declared,—"thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee;" "It is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path;" "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments."

Through the pride and perverseness which belong to the unregenerate state, very many who have that sacred light within their reach, instead of putting forth the commanded efforts to secure its instruction and guidance, remain under the deceitful workings of their own hearts, and unconsciously involved in the snares and temptations of the father of lies, and are, thus, led, deeper and deeper into merely speculative and delusive reasonings. They are like those of old, described, as "never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" and become, at length, either determined infidels, as to the true religion, or

else enchained in the profane and fatal heresies, so prevalent in the present age, of *Socinianism*,—*Universalism*, or some other unscriptural and ruinous system. There is, indeed, no perfect security against such destructive errors, but in a prayerful, attentive, and obedient adherence to the whole of the sacred Word. "Take heed *what* ye hear," and "take heed *how* ye hear," are our Lord's express injunctions; and He has further warned us,—"believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God." We can, only, accurately try and ascertain their character, by bringing them to the test of the plain and infallible Word. Here, then, let us ever look, as to one of the most important means in the gracious plan for our spiritual recovery, and ever thankfully avail ourselves of its safe and perfect instruction and guidance.

5. Conscience.—"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world," &c. 2 Cor. i, 12.——"Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck." 1 Tim. i, 19.——"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure Conscience." 1 Tim. iii, 9.——"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their Conscience seared with a hot iron." 1 Tim. iv, 2.——"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience." Heb. x, 22.——"For we trust we have a good Conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." Heb. xiii, 18.

The power, or faculty, in the soul of Man, which is called *Conscience*, is the one, which, in a moral view, sits, as it were, in judgment, on every individual. It not only takes cognizance of our outward actions, and judges concerning them, but also, in a greater or lesser degree, of our *desires*, *feelings*, and *motives*. And it gives its decisions regarding them all, with more or less force, and either for or against us, with reference to the *good*, or the *evil*, of those emotions and acts. There are different opinions, concerning the time, or the mode of the origin, or implantation, of this faculty. Some seem to think, that it was made a part of the spiritual nature of man, at his Creation; and that after his fall, it was, though in a diminished degree, left in him, for a gracious purpose, by his Merciful Creator. Others, are of opinion, that it is a measure of grace,

or a gift bestowed by the Divine and benevolent Spirit, on every human being, on coming into the World. Whichever of these opinions, or of any others, is the true one, it is of little importance to conclude. The first supposition would seem to be indicated and warranted, by the scriptural fact, that immediately, on the first visit of the Creator to our original parents, after their offence, they endeavoured to hide themselves from his presence, which seems to show the operation of this faculty of Conscience; and that the offered excuse of being "naked," was only a false pretence. Myriads of instances have shown, that it is of tremendous and afflicting power, when testifying of sin; and, also, of cheering and consoling efficacy, when pronouncing its favourable decisions. All its operations and judgments, whether condemnatory, or otherwise are by its gracious Author, intended for good. They are designed for the *restraint*, the *warning*, and as a *help* towards the reformation of the wicked: and for consolation and encouragement to the virtuous. An unrighteous and a profligate Felix, trembled under its power, and suppressed for a time, its further terrors; but the pious and righteous instrument of producing those alarming emotions, could, with confidence, say,—"this is our rejoicing, the testimony of our Conscience." In the one case, *good* was divinely intended to be wrought, while in the other there was a pure and cheering *gratification*, arising from the consciousness, that a holy and benevolent course, had been consistently and perseveringly followed.

Even, in the heathen, and all who are destitute of a divine revelation, this faculty of conscience, has ever been found, and has operated to *restrain*, or *convict*, or else to afford *approval*. For this, we have the express testimony of Scripture, in Rom. ii, 14, 15, where it is said of the Gentile world,—"These having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law, written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness and their thoughts, the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another." From this, and other parts of Scripture, it will seem, not an unfounded, and certainly a charitable opinion, that such, even, of the heathen, as act in accordance with the good monitions of conscience, may finally be saved; the righteous and atoning work of the Saviour, being for *them*, as an eminent Divine has said, "a principle of redemption," for

securing their final safety. Another learned and benevolent Divine, has thus written on the point;—"All men have what is called Conscience; and conscience, plainly supposes, the light or spirit of God. This spirit is given to enlighten, convince, strengthen, and bring men back to God. Therefore, *all* men may be saved, who attend to, and coincide with the light and convictions communicated; for the God of the Christians, does not give men his Spirit to enlighten, &c. merely to leave them without excuse: but that it may direct, strengthen, and lead them to himself that they may be finally saved. That this spirit comes from the *grace* of God, is demonstrable from hence: It is a 'good and perfect gift;' and St. James says, all such come from the 'Father of lights,' Thus, it appears, all men are partakers of the grace of God, for all acknowledge that conscience is common to all: and this is but a recipient faculty, and necessarily implies the spirit of grace, given by Jesus Christ; not that the world might be thereby *condemned*, but that it might be *saved*."

In the conversion of the Soul, under the Christian dispensation, Conscience performs, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, a most important and beneficent office. It seems, indeed, to be one of the first faculties of the soul, on which that divine Spirit operates, to effect that conversion. In giving the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Saviour said, "When he is come, he will convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." This conviction of sin takes place, through the Spirit's operation on the conscience. All through the converting and sanctifying work of that gracious Spirit, the co-operation and agency of conscience, is, also, kept in lively exercise, for effecting those purposes of divine mercy. The convinced and partially regenerated soul, as well as every other individual should, therefore, be constantly watchful and careful not to do any thing to offend, this faithful and friendly adviser; but rather cherish and obey its tenderest *monitions*. Through a long continued course of presumptuous and obstinate transgression, conscience, as the Scriptures declare, and as many instances have shown, may at length become entirely *seared* and *hardened*, during the remainder of life. It cannot, however, be utterly destroyed; but in the case of all who die in sin, it will awake to full and tormenting activity, in the eternal World, and. there, become, indeed, "the worm that dieth not."

6. Providential Dispensations.—"The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he bringeth low and lifteth up." 1 Sam. ii, 7.——"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." Ps. xciv, 12——"I know O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and thou, in faithfulness, hast afflicted me." Ps. cxix, 75.——"He maketh the devices of the people of a one effect." Ps. xxxiii. 10.——"Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South. But God is the Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. lxxv, 6, 7.——"He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct." Ps. xciv, 10.——"He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Lam. iii, 33.——"But for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Heb. xii, 10.——"Behold I will hedge up thy way with thorns." Hos. ii, 6.

Every believer in divine revelation, will, of course, admit, that the infinitely wise and Almighty Being, who created the world, and all it contains, exercises an inspection, and an overruling control and government over the whole. They cannot but assent to the plainly revealed truths, that "He ruleth among the children of men," and, "putteth down one, and setteth up another;"—that, although, "the horse" may be "prepared against the day of battle, yet safety is of the Lord." Though the veracity of these, and numerous other passages of the inspired Word, to the same effect, will be thus admitted, yet how much of real infidelity concerning them, may be found in reference to their practical operations and results, in individual instances, constantly occurring? While that government, in its general character, is acknowledged, it is, by very many, either denied, or doubted, or reluctantly admitted, if at all, in its single or particular operations and effects. All this, is, not only unscriptural, as has just been seen, from the cited texts, but even, in the eye of reason, it is utterly inconsistent and absurd. In the very nature of the subject; there can be no such thing, as a general controlling and directing government, without one of a description, extending to every individual, and every particular object and thing, within the whole sphere, over which that general supervision and government are employed and carried out. In order to its appropriate direction, and perfect accomplishment, such a *particular* providence is essentially requisite.

Like the other means, already mentioned, and explained, together with others employed by the Divine Ruler, all his providential operations, and doings in our World, are benevolently designed, and employed, for the present and eternal good of each and all of the human family. He chastiseth even the heathen for their good, that they may turn from their wickedness: while on the other hand, he leaves not himself "without witness," among them, "in giving them," like as to those who know him,—"rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." All these varied dispensations, are designed for their instruction, and welfare, that they may be led, not only to acknowledge "His eternal power and Godhead;" but to forsake the evil of their ways, be thankful for his mercies, and obey his will, according to the light of conscience, and reason, which He has put within them.

As regards those, to whom he has given a written revelation of his Will, and commands, He deals with them nationally, and individually, by various dispensations, some of a prosperous, and others, of an afflicting character. His chosen people of Israel, He rescued from galling bondage, and greatly favoured and exalted them in Ordinances, privileges, and blessings, both of temporal and of spiritual descriptions,—subdued and cast out their enemies before them, and gave them their lands, and other worldly possessions. While obedient, He gave them *rest*, and preserved them in safety, from all around them, and continued to their use, abundantly, all the good things of their fruitful and pleasant land. When rebellious, and disobedient, as they so frequently were, He chastened and corrected them, as He had previously warned them He would do. Sometimes the chastisement was effected by sending the surrounding nations to afflict and kill both old and young, to desolate their country and carry off their food and other pleasant things, as spoils, and often bear away numbers of the people into long and cruel captivity. At other times, it was accomplished by famines, pestilences, and other fearful and destructive agencies. Thus He fulfilled his words, "Be sure your sin will find you out."—"In the day that I visit, I will visit it upon them." From time to time, as He saw was needful, for their restraint or reform, and future welfare, He "hedged up their way with thorns," so that "though

they followed after their lovers, they could not overtake them." Thus He dealt with them, "as His own peculiar people, and all for their good, as He so often declared to them by His servants, the prophets; and also to preserve the knowledge of Himself, and His own Worship and Service, for the benefit of all the other Nations and families of the Earth.

In His dealings towards individuals, who enjoy the light of His revelation, and are called by His name, He exercises, in a similar manner, a constant inspection and discipline, also of a varied character. "His eyes run to and fro throughout the Earth, to show Himself strong, in behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards Him." He "delivers them from the snares of the fowler;" "gives his Angels charge over them;" "delivers them in trouble;" causes that no real evil shall befal them, but according to His promise, makes "all things work together for their good."

Refractory and disobedient professors, He chastises and corrects, in various modes, as a father chastiseth his son. To such characters, He, also, fulfils his warning word,—"Be sure your sin will find you out." He puts "thorns and snares in the way of the froward;" makes "the way of transgressors hard," and causes their own "backslidings to reprove them." In some instances, these chastisements may not take place for considerable periods after the commission of the offences for which they are inflicted; and conscience is often made to show them, the appropriate connection between the sin and the penalty. And why is all this? He has plainly said, that it is designed for their profit, that they may return unto Him, and find spiritual prosperity and happiness. In all His chastisements, and afflictive dispensations, He is still calling to them, in His Word, and in its faithful public Ministrations, as well as in other modes,—"Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" "for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth;" Return unto me, and I will receive you graciously;" "I will heal your backslidings, and love you freely."

Are any of His people in prosperous circumstances: He has so favoured them that they may have, more abundantly, the means and opportunities of securing their own spiritual, as well as real temporal welfare, and of all connected with them, and, also, of all others, far and near, to the utmost that such *prosperity* will enable them to accomplish. Are they in *poverty*,

adversity, or affliction, such dispensations are also for their good, being graciously intended to help them to be humble, and meek; to withdraw their affections from worldly objects, and to set them on things above. Such trials are, further, designed, to teach them resignation to the Divine Will, and to prepare them more fully for the glories and blessings of the heavenly inheritance; for as the Saviour has declared, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted;" "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

7. Operations of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion of Souls.—"If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi, 13.——"Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii, 5.——"It is the Spirit that quickeneth." John vi, 63.——"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v, 5.——"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. viii, 26.——"That ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Rom. xv, 13.——"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" 1 Cor. vi, 19.——"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii, 7.——"But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii, 18.——"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv, 30.——"Quench not the Spirit." 1 Thess. v, 19.——"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. iii, 5.

Of all the means already treated of, as divinely employed, in the awakening and renewal of souls, this precious agency of the Holy Spirit, is the highest and greatest, and is, indeed, indispensably requisite, for effecting that mighty and gracious work. No man has a power of his own, to regenerate, or raise himself, from his naturally darkened and depraved con-

dition, into a state of spiritual *light* and *life* and *holiness*. Inspiration declares that "no man hath quickened his own soul;" nor even when it is divinely brought into that spiritual state can he keep it so alive, without the continual energy and influence of the same sacred power. It is He who originates the first motions of that spiritual life, for it is recorded in the Word,—"You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." All through the blessed work of regeneration, and Conversion to holiness, the Holy Spirit's influence must be sought and enjoyed, for carrying forward, and perfectly securing, that gracious and blissful result.

It is clearly and repeatedly shown in Scripture, that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, conjoined with the Father and the Son, in the eternal and glorious Godhead. He is, therefore, a Being, possessing infinite *wisdom*, *love* and *power*, and all the other *perfections* of Deity. What a glorious privilege is it, therefore, and what an inestimable blessing, that we have this Almighty and benevolent Being, to enlighten and quicken, to strengthen, protect, and comfort us, in this mighty work of our salvation from everlasting misery, and for our preparation for endless glory and happiness! How helpless and undone should we be, if left to ourselves. Inward corrupt propensities and passions, would constantly work and prevail; an ensnaring World would ever delude and enchain; and the subtle and powerful adversary of souls, would easily make us his miserable prey forever. Blessed forever be our gracious God, it need not be so with any of us. That loving spirit is ever willing and ready, to visit and bless all who sincerely and earnestly seek His gracious assistance. He is declared, in Scripture, to be a spirit of *light* and *love*; and to all who believingly ask, he will freely impart, "the spirit of love, and power, and of a sound mind." He will shed abroad in their hearts the love of God and the Saviour, as well as of all mankind; and, if faithful to his grace, will enable them to gain the victory over all their enemies.

The Scriptures show that for 120 years, immediately preceding the universal deluge, He strove with the atrociously wicked, to reclaim and save them. The Lord declared, that if only *ten* righteous persons had been found in the profligate Cities of the plain, for *their sakes* the whole of the guilty inhabitants would have been spared, and had longer space to

repent and amend. The Holy Spirit, no doubt, through the warnings of the prophet Jonah, strove with the idolatrous and corrupt Ninevites, and by the repentings he thus kindled, they were spared for a longer season.

Through the whole history of the chosen Nation, as the Scriptures show, that gracious Spirit, by the several prophets, and by other means, strove to reclaim and preserve them from their idolatries and other abominations: but they would not hear, or obey, his awful, yet gracious warnings and precepts. Therefore, well might the zealous and devoted Stephen, reprovingly say to them,—"ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." Notwithstanding all their resistance to his merciful designs and operations, and even after their atrocious cruelty and wickedness towards the immaculate Lord of life and glory,—their long promised and expected Messiah,—the gracious Spirit did not, even then, utterly forsake them as a Nation, but in marvellous and convincing power, came down *visibly* on the day of Pentecost, and through the instrumentality of the Apostles, at once convinced and converted thousands of that unbelieving and blood-stained people. And, further, although their priests and rulers, and the nation at large, continued to disbelieve the miraculous proofs afforded them, that the Lord Jesus whom they had rejected and crucified, was, indeed, their true Messiah, and still refused the offers of mercy made to them, the Holy Spirit did not, at once, utterly forsake them. He still continued His marvellous and saving influences, and convinced and converted multitudes, even many in the corrupt priesthood, through a course of years, down to the time that a just retribution came upon them, in the final destruction of their guilty City, the unparalelled carnage and sufferings among them, and their National dispersion.

The operations and gifts of this gracious Spirit, for the regeneration of the human soul, have been purchased by the meritorious atoning work of our loving Redeemer; for of Him it was, prophetically, declared by the inspired Psalmist,—"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." It is said in John vii, 39, "the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." He had, indeed, been given,

by anticipation, in comparatively, *limited* degrees, through all previous generations. He had spoken by the prophets, and others, and had, from the first, convinced and sanctified every Servant of God, for Jesus was "the lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the World;" but the Holy Spirit did not come down in his full and richest effusions, until after that Lamb's actual atoning death, namely, on the day of Pentecost which immediately followed. The Saviour *consolingly* said to his disciples, just before He fulfilled that precious offering of himself,—"It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the World of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." By his direct operations on the conscience, and in other modes, but, chiefly, through the instrumentality of His own written Word, He gives the sinner to see and feel his sin and danger. He proceeds to enlighten his mind in the knowledge of divine things, shows him in the Word, and through its ministry, the divine remedy for his recovery from the disease of sin, through the merits and sufferings of the Redeemer on his behalf; and imparts the power to believe on *Him*, "with the heart unto righteousness," with that "faith which works by love" and "overcomes the World." Thus, are fulfilled, in personal and joyful experience, the gracious promises,—"Behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you,"—"When He the Spirit of truth is come," said the Saviour, "He will guide you into all truth." "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

But, further, the assistance of the Holy Spirit is indispensably required, through the whole of Christian experience. He "makes intercession" for all praying believers, "helps their infirmities,"—draws them nearer and nearer to the Saviour,—"witnesses with their spirits" that they "are the children of God;"—"Seals" their "redemption;"—is an "earnest" in their hearts; and if faithful, enables them to "abound," and be "joyful in hope." He assists them to contend with, and overcome, the evil desires, propensities, and appetites, of the natural and carnal state, and, in every faithful and obedient believer, effects the work of entire sanctification: and, finally, prepares the soul to be "brought under the King, in raiment

of needle work,"—" in fine linen, white and clean,—" without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

The direct operations of the Holy Spirit on the several powers and faculties of the human soul, is plainly revealed throughout the inspired volume. We know that such direct influence is utterly denied by some, who yet think they possess the knowledge of scriptural truth, even of all the fundamentals of true Christianity. Others there are, who admit that divine influence on the soul, for its regeneration; but, yet judge of it, as a work that neither is, or can be, *consciously* discerned, felt, or known, by those on whom it is wrought. It is, as they conclude, an operation, which can neither be apprehended, understood, or experimentally enjoyed. Now, contrary to all such real ignorance on the point, it can be clearly shown, not only from numerous plain declarations of Scripture, but, also, from sound reason, and the genuine scriptural philosophy of the whole subject, that such a *direct* and conscious testimony of the Holy Spirit, is a perfectly valid and consistent doctrine. Very many passages of Scripture, not only promise that it may be obtained, by genuine believers,—testifying of their pardon and peace with God,—but, further, show, that it is the privilege of all such, to possess and enjoy it, in a *feeling* and *unmistakeable* manner, in a greater or lesser degree, according to the measure of their faith, and their zealous and active obedience. Here are a few of such scriptural passages,—" The Spirit itself, beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. viii, 16.——" Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii, 12.——" Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." 1 Cor. iii, 16.——" Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. i, 22.——" In whom, also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Eph. i, 13.

In the first of the passages, here cited, there is mentioned a witness of the Holy Spirit, with the spirit of man. Now, we know, that a witness, is one who reveals or makes known, certain facts or things to others; and, surely, in every instance of knowledge imparted by a witness, the person, or persons, to whom that knowledge is so imparted, must, at the time, be

conscious and *know of its reception.* In two of the other passages, an "earnest" of the Spirit is mentioned. This expression, is in allusion, or analogy, to something given as a *pledge* for performance, or as *part payment*, in the case of some covenant or agreement, between parties; and in every such instance, the party to whom such pledge is given, or payment made, cannot but know that he receives it. In the case of the gracious witness given by the Holy Spirit, as an *earnest* of further and future blessings, a *conscious* knowledge of *receiving* that earnest, is equally evident to the individual, to whom it is given. In another of the cited passages, a question is put, as though they to whom it was addressed, could not but know, by the *inward* spiritual revelation or *testimony* of the sacred and truthful witness, that their "bodies" were his "temple." This precious gift of the Holy Spirit as a "witness," and an "earnest," is not so mentioned, as to be *confined* to the members of the Roman, the Corinthian, the Ephesian, or any other Christian Churches, or to the early or any future age of Christianity. That gift, in that first period of the Church, did not, *necessarily*, confer on any who possessed it, the power to work miracles. It is always mentioned in the Scriptures, as the *common privilege* of all believers; and there is abundant scriptural authority to show, that such divine *inward* testimony is given to all true and obedient believers, throughout *all ages* of the Church. In many passages of Scripture, the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of Christ," because his gracious influences have been purchased, for the spiritual good of all, by the righteous and atoning work of that Almighty and compassionate Redeemer. It is written,—"if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." These words are of the very widest application. They clearly mean, that any man, professing Christianity, in any age, in any Country, holding any creed, or system of doctrine, however orthodox; or under any mode or form of Church institution, government, discipline, or worship, or in any other *external* particular, if he have not the "Holy Spirit,"—the "Spirit of Christ" he does not really belong to Christ, or, in other words, he is not a member of Christ's mystical body, a *genuine* Christian. We repeat, that he who possesses that gracious Spirit, witnessing to him, that he is pardoned; and that Christ is thus "formed" in him "the hope of glory" cannot but know it, for it is writ-

ten,—"know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." So intimate is that Spiritual Union, between believers and Christ, that Scripture declares,—"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Now, although this Scriptural testimony, is most abundantly sufficient to show the truth of this inward witness of the Holy Spirit, in every faithful believer, yet as sound reason and true philosophy have been referred to, in application to the subject, it may not be altogether useless as to certain descriptions of persons to examine it on those grounds also. We are clearly informed, in the inspired Word, that the eternal and glorious God is a Spirit,—a purely Spiritual Being,—who is "the Father of the spirits of all flesh," as the Scriptures declare, and of every other description of spiritual existence;—that He is every where present, throughout the universe He has formed and sustains; and that in Him, "we live, and move, and have our being." He created and breathed into man, from his own Spirit, the immortal principle or essence called the *Soul*. He constantly sustains and preserves that soul in existence, in the body, while here; and He has told us, that it will exist forever. Now, is it not in full accordance with reason, and of all true philosophy, as applied to the subject, that He who so formed the human spirit, can, by the operation and influence of His *own Spirit* thereon, either *quicken* and *enlighten*, or *strengthen*, and *elevate*, or *depress* and *afflict*, that *human spirit*; or *sustain*, *cheer*, and *comfort* it, and cause it to *rejoice*, in a thoroughly *convincing consciousness* of the pardoning mercy, and the favour of Him who called it into being, and sustains it therein? Surely all this is perfectly *rational* and consistent as well as plainly *Scriptural*. Even that philosophical and speculative theologian, Dr. Paley, in treating of this inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, to a soul relieved of its burden of sin, asserts, that a man might as soon forget his escape from a *shipwreck*, as not know, or remember, that he had experienced that testimony. He will know, and can call to mind, the *time*, *place*, and other *circumstances* of that precious comforting witness of pardoning mercy, and of divine acceptance and favour.

We are all fully conscious of the natural feelings of *love*, and *aversion*; of *anger*, *envy*, *ambition*, and the various other *passions* and *emotions* which arise or dwell within us. Surely, then, on the ground of reason alone, we cannot but be con-

scious of the presence, and direct witness and influence of that gracious Spirit who is essential *love*; and who, as the Scriptures declare, bestows on the hearts and souls He regenerates, his own fruits of "love, joy and peace," making them to "abound," in every confiding and obedient believer.

Christians are solemnly warned and exhorted, not to "grieve," nor "quench" the Spirit of God, whereby they are "sealed unto the day of redemption." One, or other, of these awful evils, they will bring upon themselves, by the commission of known sin, of any description, for Wisdom, it is declared, is a *holy* as well as a *loving* Spirit, and "will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in." Every believer constantly requires the renewing, strengthening, and comforting assistance of that blessed Spirit. Let all therefore, continually, and earnestly seek his gracious influences, and cherish and obey all his intimations and leadings. Then, shall "their peace flow as a river," and their "righteousness as the waves of the Sea," and the light of the "Sun of righteousness" shall shine upon their pathway of life, "more and more, unto the perfect day."

In here drawing to a conclusion, and on a review of this glorious plan, and the numerous, and efficacious, means and methods of divine mercy, for the pardon of sinful and helpless man,—his reconciliation to his offended God;—his conversion to inward and outward holiness, and consequent preparation and fitness for the abodes of eternal glory and happiness;—how appropriate and expressive, are the following words of inspired truth;—"Wisdom hath builded her house," "she hath also furnished her table," "she crieth upon the highest places of the City,"—"Whoso is simple let him turn in hither,"—"forsake the foolish and live and go in the way of understanding;"—"What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done to it?"—"Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money come;"—"Come for all things are now ready;"—"And the Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Viewing all these means and mercies so richly provided, and so freely and invitingly offered, how appropriate, and well adapted to alarm, is the inspired interrogatory,—"How shall

we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Such neglect, cannot but be insulting to the Majesty and the goodness of that glorious Being, who has provided it for us, at such an inestimable price, and through such wise and gracious means, has not only set it plainly before us, but has even condescended to *entreat* us to accept it. We may not deny or despise that salvation, but merely by its *neglect*, in failing to employ the means within our reach for obtaining it, we shall inevitably secure our eternal ruin, by causing its *just*, as well as gracious Author, to swear in his righteous displeasure, that we "shall not enter into His rest."

SERMON V.

ON THE

SCRIPTURAL COURSE

FOR THE

AWAKENED SINNER, IN SEEKING CONVERSION.

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1. Faith and Hope in God.—"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he will strengthen thy heart: wait I say on the Lord." Ps. xxvii, 14.——"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord." Ps. xxxi, 24.——"My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him." Ps. lxii, 5.——"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his Word do I hope." "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." Ps. cxxx, 5, 7.——"The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him; in them that hope in his mercy," Ps. cxlvii, 11.——"Therefore, wil

ne Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, and, therefore, will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him." Is. xxx, 18——"They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." Is. xlix, 23.——"The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, unto the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Lam. iii, 25, 26.——"Jesus answering, saith unto them, have faith in God." Mark xi, 22.——"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii, 4.——"Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is: and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. xi, 6.——"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 1 Pet. iii, 9.

The foregoing passages of Scripture, with many others, clearly reveal, that it is not the will of our gracious God, that any soul should remain in sin, and be finally ruined and miserable. On the contrary, they make known, not merely his will, but to speak after the manner of men, his earnest desire, that all should turn from evil, and turn unto Him, and find mercy and forgiveness, and every needful grace and favour, while here, and eternal happiness hereafter. Like as on every other subject, contained in Scripture, regarding the human race, the dispensations of God toward us, are in perfect accordance with his infallible and unchangeable Word. He has, in that Word, declared himself to be,—"merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." This last expression,—"the guilty," doubtless, refers to those, who *impenitently* remain in their sins, and die in that state. If we reflect on the character of the Divine Being, revealed in his Word, as a God of infinite purity, essentially and utterly opposed to all manner of unrighteousness, whether in thought, or desire, word, or deed, and, then, look abroad, and behold the idolatry, impiety, and ungodliness, the profanity, profligacy, and wickedness of every imaginable form, which so greatly abound; and much of them, even in professedly Christian lands, we cannot fail to perceive, that

He, who is of Almighty power, and has all elements and means at his command, and could, therefore, at once bring all these evils to an end, by cutting down and punishing all the transgressors, is, indeed, "long suffering" and "merciful" as He has declared himself to be; and that he wills the *welfare* and *happiness* of mankind and not their *ruin* and *misery*. All who have experienced converting grace, and a conscious sense of the pardoning mercy of God, especially such of them, as have been long and deeply involved in the ways of sin, will reflect, and often with astonishment, on his long suffering towards them: and will be able to mark, many instances of his preservation of them from death, or other afflicting effects of their reckless and guilty conduct. They will, indeed, in their own personal experience, see and feel the truth of the declaration, that "he waits to be gracious." Even many careless and ungodly persons, after special preservations, or deliverances from extraordinary dangers or calamities, have been drawn, or as it were compelled to acknowledge the interposing hand of a long suffering and merciful providence towards them. Some such specially providential interpositions, occur, indeed, in the history of nearly every individual; and if not openly acknowledged, yet are impressed with more or less force on his own mind; and are divinely intended to operate, as one of the various means employed, for producing repentance, and a saving change of conduct and character. A Jacob who had cruelly supplanted his brother, was made to experience severe and long continued sufferings, for his conduct, and after, as may well be presumed, humbly and sincerely repenting of the same, he received the divine forgiveness, and was preserved from many great impending dangers; and made the heir of the most exalted and gracious promises. David was not only saved repeatedly, from the persecuting hand of his enemy Saul, who seemed just about to destroy him: but, after the two great sins of his life, on his deep repentance, and humbly submitting to the retributive temporal punishment, he experienced the truth of the Word, that the Lord is "long suffering, gracious and merciful." Even that envious and persecuting Saul, was often saved from impending dangers and death, and experienced restraints and warnings, to induce him to seek the divine forgiveness, and a spirit of *grace*, in the place of the spirit of *evil*, by which he was ultimately led into such depths

of wickedness. He, too, if like the one he persecuted, he had humbled himself, and turned from evil, might, and, doubtless, would have experienced, that the Lord "waits to be gracious." A treacherous Joab, and an Ahab, guilty of the most base and atrocious murders, were long spared; and if they had imitated the conduct of the royal and penitent David, would, also, have obtained mercy for their souls. An idolatrous Manasseh, when brought to repentance, in his season of captivity, and deep affliction, also found, that the Lord is "gracious." And to mention no other instances, a second cruel and persecuting Saul, experienced forgiveness, and was exalted to be the greatest and most successful Apostolic Messenger of mercy to others.

The great and precious atonement, ordained, from the beginning, to be made at the time appointed, and which has accordingly been offered, has opened the way for the divine long suffering and mercy to be exercised, towards a rebellious and wicked World, in harmony with the sacred attributes of holiness and justice. Through that all sufficient atonement, it is, that forgiveness can be extended, even to the chief of sinners, on their sincere repentance, and turning to him, who has borne with their ingratitude and crimes, and has thus waited with long suffering that his *grace* might be magnified, in their pardon and salvation, instead of his *holiness* and *justice* in their eternal misery. The gracious declarations of the long suffering of the Lord, and his readiness to receive in mercy, the soul that he inclines to turn towards him, are intended, and serve, to encourage, not only the sinner on his first desires and efforts to obtain forgiveness, but also the pardoned, and partially renewed spirit, through every stage of its probationary and sanctifying experience. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." From the first awakening and movements of a soul towards a return to God, and seeking salvation, through every stage of religious experience, it is essentially needful, to cherish and exercise, faith and hope in the divine mercy and grace. One of the cited texts, declares, that "without faith, it is impossible to please God;" and another, that "He taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in them that hope in his mercy." The gracious Lord, who wills the salvation of all, and who knows

the natural frame of spirit, of each and every one of us, has seen it needful to afford, such, and so many precious promises, as we find in his Word, to stimulate and encourage every soul, whom he draws to seek his favour. If it were not for such comprehensive and cheering promises, many who have pursued a long career of reckless and aggravated sin, would be cast down in utter despair, and perish through unbelief of obtaining mercy. Let every soul, then, that feels a sincere desire to turn from evil, and seek divine forgiveness, be encouraged by those gracious promises. Such a desire, is, of itself, a token for good. It comes from *above*, from "the Father of lights" and mercies, and is the drawing of that spirit of *light* and *love* whose quickening and saving operations have been purchased, by the righteousness and atoning sacrifice of our Almighty and loving Redeemer. The gracious Father, thus draws the awakened soul to come to the Saviour, and of Him it is declared,—"a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory," to all who sincerely and earnestly strive, in the divinely appointed way, to secure the blessings of his great salvation. But let none who are living careless in sin and folly; or who are at all awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, slight or abuse the divine mercy and forbearance, and continue in their unconverted and guilty state, resting in the delusive thought, that at some future season, convenient to themselves, they will seek and secure an escape, from the righteous and final retributions of an offended God. Let all such bear in mind, that although he does, indeed, "wait to be gracious," yet that *waiting* has its justly prescribed *limits*. He waited for the repentance and turning from evil, of Saul the vindictive and persecuting King, whose life was repeatedly spared, by him whom he sought to destroy. On several occasions, he was favoured with compunctions of conscience, and seemed about to turn and amend; but, by continuing in open and daring transgressions, he became bereaved of every gracious restraint and desire, and filling up the measure of his wickedness, he was left without hope, to perish by his own guilty hand. Balaam, also, and Judas, with multitudes of others, through every age, who had means and warnings to induce and enable them to turn from evil, and seek and find forgiveness, have, through continuance in covetousness, pride,

or sensuality, or ot' er forms of wickedness, been left destitute of gracious operations and restraints; and have persisted and perished in their impenitence and guilt. In all such instances, is fulfilled, these awful, but righteous declarations of a just and holy God,—"My Spirit shall not always strive with man;"—"He, that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." To avoid the wretched condition of those to whom these awful declarations apply, let every careless as well as awakened sinner, beware of tempting the forbearance of God, and, at once, comply with the merciful and urgent invitation, to,—"seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near." There is no promise as to any future and convenient period, for repenting and obtaining the offered mercy. *Now*, is the only time divinely appointed, both for saint and sinner, to "give all diligence to make their calling and election sure." "The night cometh, when no man can work."

2. Repentance and Turning from Evil.—"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Ps. cxix, 59.——"Turn you at my reproof." Prov. i, 23.——"Forsake the foolish, and live, and go in the way of understanding." Prov. ix, 6.——"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy." Prov. xxviii, 13.——"Cease to do evil; learn to do well." Is. i, 16, 17.——"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Is. lv, 7.——"Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin." Ez. xviii, 30.——"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, and reap in mercy." Hos. x, 12——"Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Math. iii, 2.——"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," 8 v.——

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Math. xvi, 24.——"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come, from the presence of the Lord." Acts iii, 19.——"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xx, 21.——"Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded, be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." James iv, 8, 9, 10.——"Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Cor. xv, 33.——"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi, 14.

The *essential* requisites at the commencement of seeking salvation, namely,—*Repentance*, and *forsaking sin*, are so clearly set forth, in the foregoing Scriptures, that, it is presumed, none who have any belief whatever, in divine truth, can mistake their meaning, or reasonably deny, the necessity and duty, of the compliance required. If any number of the subjects of a civil government, should go into open rebellion against its authority and laws, none will deny, that before they could reasonably expect, or ask for pardon, and to be restored to the privileges and advantages of the government, they must cease from their rebellious acts,—express sincere regret for their violations of allegiance and duty; and not only willingly and heartily promise, but actually yield, that submission and obedience, which the constitution and laws of the government require. Surely, then, they who have, in innumerable instances, disregarded the authority, and violated the laws of that glorious Ruler of the Universe, who gave them existence, has preserved and sustained them in life; and bestowed upon them every blessing they have ever enjoyed; surely, *they* should humble themselves before their divine Sovereign and Benefactor; acknowledge their rebellion and offences, with sincere sorrow and regret;—cease from all their transgressions; and seek for forgiveness on the terms which he has graciously prescribed for obtaining it; and for his mercy and

favour in the future. All must admit, that such a course of conduct is every way becoming, and just and reasonable. But, here, let us examine and ascertain, what is meant by the repentance divinely enjoined,—and what, according to the inspired Word, does it require and comprehend. Some may, at once, say, it means, of course, a regret and sorrow for violations and neglects of duty. This as a general answer, is perfectly correct. But this further point is to be ascertained, what is the *description*, or, nature of that regret and sorrow, and to what *quarter*, and to what *particulars* do they refer? We know that these feelings arise from a great variety of causes, and are very diverse in their nature and effects. Every individual, who has by his own wilful conduct, brought upon himself, afflictive or ruinous effects; and, especially, one of that character, who is about to die; and has any sense or feeling whatever, of his guilty state; though he may not openly confess his sorrow, yet will inwardly regret, or deplore, that he followed such a course of transgression, as brought him into that state of conscious guilt, and of dread of consequent misery in a future state. There are vast numbers who have all these feelings of regret, of guilt, and apprehension, both while in health and strength, and when drawing near to death; and, yet, have nothing at all of that repentance, which this scriptural term implies and requires. The repentance mentioned in Scripture, as preparatory to, and *preceding* the divine pardon, includes, it is true, a regret and sorrow for sins committed; but it is not, merely, because of their distressing consequences: but it is a "godly sorrow," having a reference to the Divine Being: and under a view of those sins, as ungratefully and wickedly committed against his righteous authority and laws, and gracious forbearance. It is, in Scripture, expressly called, a "godly sorrow," working "repentance unto salvation" or leading to it;—a "repentance unto life." It produces a sense of shame, and of more or less deep humiliation before God, for having disregarded, and offended against, his continued mercy and goodness; and is ever accompanied, with a sincere desire, and resolution, to cease from transgression, and turn unto Him, in the way of faith and obedience, as enjoined in his Word. But, further, such a repentance, no individual, unaided by divine grace, can originate or produce in himself. It is, in its very inception,

a divine gift. The Scriptures declare, that Jesus is exalted "to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" and that "God, also, to the Gentiles hath granted repentance unto life." The promise in Ezekiel xi. 19, is to the same effect,—"I will give them one heart, and I will put a new Spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh." God is the "Giver of every good and perfect gift." It is, therefore, as true of all genuine converts at the present day, as is scripturally declared of the Ephesian believers,—"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The Holy Spirit, is, He who *convinces of sin.* From a consideration of this vital and most important truth, that true repentance is through a *divine* operation, let every soul beware of continuing in sin, lest the grace of repentance, be withheld, or withdrawn; and hardness and final impenitence, complete its doom and misery. If this grace of genuine repentance, be, indeed, earnestly and perseveringly sought, by the awakened sinner, it will, as with reference to every other needed blessing, be surely granted by Him, who is "merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;" who has even sworn, that he takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked;" and who "waits to be gracious." Of the Saviour, it is declared,—"A bruised reed shall he not break and the smoking flax shall he not quench." If any feel only the least desire, or need, for such repentance, instead of endeavouring to dismiss or suppress the feeling, let them cherish it, as, of itself, a gracious inclination; and pray, and strive, that it may early result in a genuine spiritual repentance, unto gospel life and salvation. Let all, however, beware of resting in a mere reformation of external conduct; and concluding, that this is all that is comprehended in the repentance required. Like every other part of religious experience, it must have its operation and effects on the *spirit* and the *heart.*

At the same time, with the exercise of the divinely prompted and assisted repentance, there must, indeed, be a reformation of the external conduct, in the forsaking of every sinful and unrighteous act, and every form of iniquity and evil. A mere sorrow for past transgressions, without such an amendment in moral behaviour,—would be of no avail, as to obtaining the divine forgiveness and favour. A number of the Scriptures

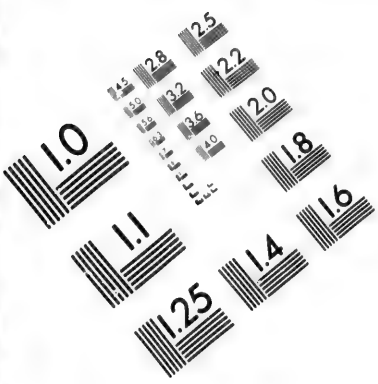
cited at the head of this discourse: and the whole tenor of revelation on the subject, show, that such a turning from evil, and endeavours to walk in the ways of truth and righteousness, are indispensably required, at the very first setting out, to seek the salvation of the gospel. The commands are,—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord,"—"Cease to do evil, and learn to do well." It is only to him who both "*confesseth*" and "*forsaketh*" his *sin*, that the promise of pardon is made. Throughout the gospel invitations to the unconverted, repentance is mentioned, as *preceding* that faith in the Saviour, through which pardon is obtained. The revealed plan of salvation, has invariably prescribed, the order and method of obtaining forgiveness, in the following, and similar terms.—"Repent ye, and believe the gospel:"—"Repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance;" "Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Every intelligent mind, not entirely blinded and enchained by the power of evil propensities, and practices, will readily see, and acknowledge, that, in seeking salvation, the repentance and external amendment required, are, on the ground of reason alone, perfectly appropriate and just. The word *repentance*, as used in the Scriptures, implies, of itself, and includes, a turning from the ways of sin, as well as of sorrow towards God, for all previous transgressions. This *latter*, without the *former* would not only be hypocritical, and utterly inconsistent and absurd, but would greatly increase the previous guilt.

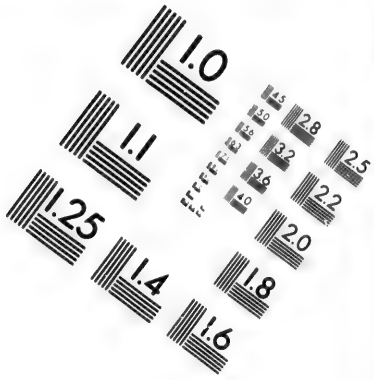
Here, may be briefly noticed, an error in the exhortations and efforts of some, who are sincerely desiring and endeavouring, to induce the unconverted to seek salvation. Without saying any thing to them about repentance, or turning from evil, they, merely, at once invite them to come to the Saviour, and give him their *hearts* frequently inviting and *urging* them, in these, and similar terms,—"*come just as you are.*" Now, there is no Scriptural warrant, or sanction, for an invitation, thus unattended with any exhortation to *repentance*, and turning to the Lord, and simultaneously forsaking, or at least openly declaring, a sincere and firm determination to *forsake* all ways of sin and folly. Such *unqualified* and unconditional invitations, are not only *unscriptural*, but extremely injudicious and dangerous, as to their results. Not a

few, and especially among the young, who have had no real spiritual convictions of their sinful and guilty state, but who think it becoming and proper, to make a profession of religion: and to unite with some Christian denomination, are induced to present themselves, even publicly, under such urgent solicitations from those they respect, and in whose piety and judgment they confide, and hastily make the open profession required, by such their *ardent* advisers. Having been thus *unguardedly* invited and received, very many of them, through a native self complacency; and an ignorance both of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the nature and requisitions of the Christian religion, are led to conclude, that they are truly religious, in a certain degree. Unless, thereafter, truly awakened, and converted, they remain throughout life, in the same unrepenting and merely formal profession; and depart into eternity, in their native blind and unconverted condition. Of such unrepentant and hasty professors, probably, the greater number, through the temptations and enticements to sin, in some, or all of the forms, of—"the lusts of the flesh," or, "of the eye," or, "the pride of life," or in other modes; and having no seed or power of divine grace *within*, to induce, or enable them to resist, and overcome, after some longer, or shorter time, fall entirely away, from, even, a *seeming*, profession of piety and godliness; and seek their enjoyment, as before in the pursuits and pleasures of a vain and sinful World. Others, of such professors, when observed to act, at times, plainly inconsistent with religious duty, will, in general, by merely worldly persons, be considered and stigmatized as *hypocrites*: but, in reality, that is not a true or appropriate definition of their character. A *hypocrite*, according to the proper meaning of the word, is a person, who for more effectually securing some selfish or improper purpose, or object, designedly, and wilfully assumes, and holds forth, a religious principle and profession. He may deceive others, but he knows what he is about, and, therefore, does not deceive himself, as to his professions, and his own true position. He is, indeed, a wilful and aggravated sinner: and many of this class of persons, are fully conscious, that such is their character. But, the persons of the first-mentioned class, who have been induced to make a religious profession, under the persuasions and inducements described, are not hypocrites, but to use appropriate language,

they are *self deceivers*. As already observed, not having any conscious apprehension of their really sinful and guilty state,—of the evil and hatefulness, of sin, in the sight of a holy God,—and of the true nature and extent of his laws and requirements concerning them, they are, through the native deceitfulness of their hearts, soothed and enchained, in a belief, that they are in a state of security, or, at least, of good and consoling hope, for the eternal World. Thus, they deceive themselves, and in very many instances, are finally ruined. They are similar to those who build upon the sand: and if they continue in their *self deception*, the end will be the same. To all such, these inspired words, suitably apply,—"whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain;"—"If a man think himself to be *something* when he is *nothing*, he deceiveth himself." Where there is *one hypocrite*, in the proper meaning of the term, in reference to religion, there is a score of *self deceivers* as to real *conversion*, and spiritual renewal. They are not confined to any one religious denomination, but they are still to be found, in numbers, in all of them: and in some, they greatly abound. There being so many of them, may be ascribed in a very great measure, to the hasty and unguarded manner, as already described, in which they have been *urged* and invited, and brought into *Church fellowship*, and considered to be truly converted. Some or many of their open immoralities, and sensual practices; or follies and vanities, when compared with Scriptural truth, plainly reveal their true character, of *self deceivers*. It is even a degree of *charity*, or kindly feeling, to ascribe such inconsistent and improper conduct, rather to that secret *deception*, than to wilful and base *hypocrisy*. The true *godly repentance*, which should precede, and which, in a greater or lesser degree, does always, actually precede, *justifying faith*, and a conscious sense of pardon, through the divine witness, has already been described. It is ever accompanied, with a conviction of the duty of immediately ceasing from all open sins and immoralities; and produces desires and endeavours, to walk in the ways of integrity and righteousness.

Let us, now, in the light and guidance of scriptural truth, advert to some particulars of conduct, which should be observed, by every individual, who is in a state of genuine repentance; and is sincerely seeking the divine forgiveness and





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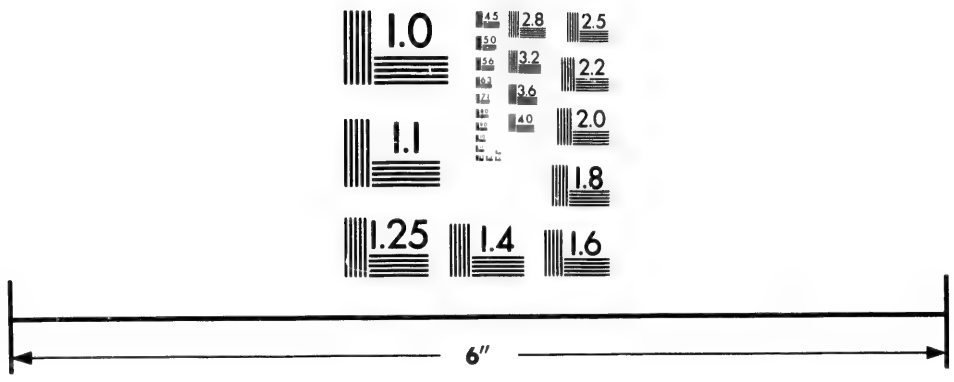

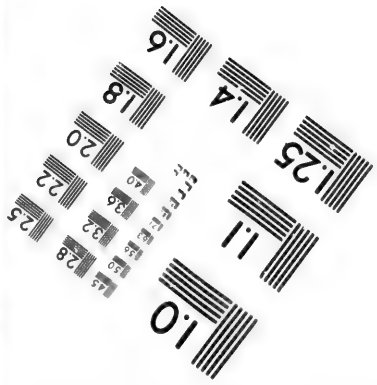

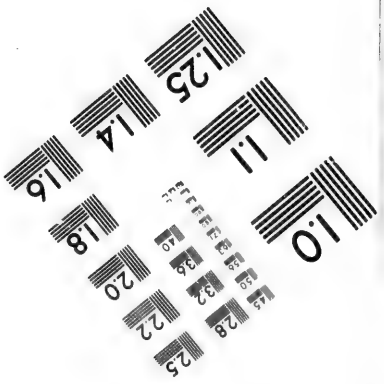

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favour. He is commanded to "turn from all his transgressions;" to "cease to do evil and learn to do well." He must, therefore, at once, obediently comply, with *will* and *heart*, with these sacred and reasonable injunctions; and seek assistance from above, to enable him to do so effectually. He must abandon every openly sinful and immoral practice, in which he before indulged:—every species of conduct which *conscience* forbids: and, especially, which the divine *Word* prohibits, and shows him to be contrary to religious truth and duty. He must abhor, and avoid, the slightest tendency, or approach, towards any species of profaneness, profligacy, or dissoluteness;"—all dishonesty and unrighteousness, in his occupations and intercourse with his fellow men:—every *corrupting* or *demoralizing* business which he may have been following:—all courses and scenes of vice and dissipation;—all violent anger, and strife,—evil speaking and falsehood,—idleness, and merely sensual indulgences. He must, also, as far as possible, avoid all his former sinful companions: for the command is,—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord." He must abstain from all corrupting and dissipating associations, scenes and exhibitions; for here the commands meet *him* as well as all others in the Christian course,—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." In short, he must avoid every other action and practice, towards God,—himself,—or others, which as already intimated, are either in special, or general terms, prohibited by the divine Word. It is written, that it is by "taking heed" to this *Word*, that the "young man" is to "cleanse his way" and, indeed, all others as well.

Works of piety, of righteousness and benevolence, in accordance with such true repentance, are, also, as scripturally commanded, to be performed, as means and opportunities admit and require, but the repenting and seeking soul, must beware of *resting* in the least upon these, or of entertaining for a moment, the thought, that there is any real *merit*, in any such performances, or that they can, of themselves, recommend him to the divine mercy, for obtaining pardon and acceptance.

Very many have been brought into the state of self deception, which has been described, chiefly through the unscrip-

tural and injudicious exhortations and advice of friends and others, being religious professors, who, like their converts, have been brought into a profession of religion, and of being *converted;* and into *church fellowship*, through a similar course of unscriptural instruction; and, thus, *themselves* were never truly converted, but, really, belonged to the same class of *self deceivers*. Such persons will urgently press those they are seeking to convert, with these and similar entreaties,—"Come to Jesus,"—"give your heart, at once, to the Lord," without saying a syllable, about the divine commands regarding repentance, and turning from the ways and associations of sin and folly. They thus speak, and exhort, just as though it were in the power of an individual, at any time he pleased, to change his own *spirit* and *heart*, and unaided by grace to love the Lord, and become a real convert to true religion. This cannot be done, by merely *human* efforts, for the inspired words, still apply,—"No man hath quickened his own soul," "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, *draw* him,"—"Without *me*, ye can do nothing,"—meaning,—without his gracious *power* and *influence*. The unscriptural and unguarded exhortations and efforts, which have here been noticed, may, and very frequently do, serve towards increasing the numbers in churches;—to such an extent indeed, in some of them, that, at length, such *self deceivers*, in the whole, form the very large majority of church membership.

From what has here been said, let it not, however, be, for a moment, supposed, that it is the opinion of the writer, that frequent *pointed*, and *urgent* persuasions, are not to be addressed to the unconverted by ministers, and all other religious professors. Not merely his opinion, but his full *conviction* is altogether otherwise. They should, by all the professed friends of religion, be often, and affectionately warned, and exhorted, to seek the salvation of their souls: but such addresses, should always be made, according to the *divine plan* and *order*, as declared in Scripture, and, in conformity therewith, and should ever be accompanied and enforced, by the announcements of those portions of inspired truth, which are, *then*, most pointedly applicable to the *spirit* and *conduct* of those, to whom their exhortations are addressed. The disapproval on this subject, which has been here expressed, is intended to apply only, where such language of invitation and advice is employed.

as is not accompanied by the Scriptural exhortations and commands to repentance; and to show its sincerity, and a real desire for salvation, by immediately forsaking every evil association, and sinful practice. The *male* person, should, by the exhibition of divine truth, be exhorted to abandon his merely sensual indulgences; his course of seeking gratification, or what is called enjoyment, in the worse than vain pursuits,—the ensnaring and dissipating scenes, of an ungodly, and unrighteous World. The unconverted *female*, should, in like manner, be warned and exhorted, to lay aside her giddy and vain conversation, and ways; her unseemly and glaring exhibitions, and fooleries in *apparel*, and of various other descriptions, which are so prevalent in the present day; and which cherish, and maintain, that inward *pride* and *vanity*, which are so directly contrary to the spirit, and the plain injunctions of the divine Word: not only as applicable to the converted and renewed soul, but to all who have any desire to seek and obtain *genuine conversion*. If such a course of appropriate Scriptural warnings, and exhortations, were perseveringly observed in the churches, by its *official* and other members, the fulfilment of the numerous divine promises, might be consistently expected; and, in harmony with Scriptural truth, would very soon be largely realized, in the revival of true and undefiled Christianity. "The wilderness and the solitary place, would, indeed, become glad;" for waters would there "break out," and "streams in the desert," which would soon "rejoice and blossom as the rose;"—the eyes of the blind would be opened and the "ears of the deaf be unstopped;"—the spiritual converts would be many, and flourish, as "trees of righteousness," of the "planting of the Lord's right hand;" the people would then, indeed, be "all taught of the Lord;" and great would be the *peace* and *prosperity* of his earthly Zion.

3. Means of Grace,—Prayer.—"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Ps. cxlv, 18.——"Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Ps. l, 14, 15.——"Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—

For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Luke xi, 9, 10, 13.——"And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke xviii, 1.——"Continuing instant in prayer." Rom. xii, 12.——"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." James i, 5, 6.——"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. lxvi, 18.

The necessity and the duty of prayer;—of sincere and earnest supplication, to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift," are plainly and repeatedly declared and enjoined in Scripture, as applying, from the first thought or desire of a soul for spiritual conversion, through every stage and condition of religious experience. The *necessity*, is owing to our being naturally sinful creatures, and being dependent on God, for every good and blessing we need, or enjoy; and the *duty* is equally plain and imperative, for He has not only *exhorted*, but has *commanded* us to ask importunately for his pardon, and all the other mercies and favours we require. "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them," says the Lord; and, again,—"Pray always." "Ye have not, because ye ask not," is the *reproach* of divine wisdom, and benevolence, and which so often applies. In every age, even the nations and tribes, under idolatrous and false systems of religion, have felt the necessity of some supernatural assistance; and, accordingly, have been frequent and earnest in their prayerful applications to their deities, or other invisible beings, in whom they believed and confided; and from whom they expected, they would, thus, obtain the protection and other advantages, which they felt that they constantly needed; and which they believed, those deities, alone, had the power to bestow. How different to these, is the conduct of many who profess to believe in Christianity, as the only true religion; and though favoured with all the gospel means for the renewal, and salvation of their souls, yet greatly, or wholly, neglect, prayer to a God of infinite *grace* and *power*, for ob

taining his spiritual mercies and blessings. Surely, all such are, indeed, in utter blindness, through sin, and, consequently, form a part of that vast and unhappy multitude, who, as the Scriptures declare, are "living without God, and without hope in the World." Probably, most of them, occasionally, or even, statedly, attend on public religious ministrations; or, at some very *convenient time*, look into a Bible. But, these outward performances, are very far from being a sufficient compliance, with the plain and strict requisitions of the Divine Being, set forth in his Word, for earnestly, and constantly asking, and striving, to secure the mercies and graces of his great salvation. The condition on which these inestimable blessings are promised, certainly, cannot be thought of, as an objection, or a reason for neglecting to seek their fulfilment in personal experience. None are required to macerate, or torment their bodies, or perform long and distressing pilgrimages, or penances, as the idolatrous and superstitious imagine they are required to do, in order to obtain the pardon and other blessings they desire. With our gracious and benevolent God, the condition, for obtaining his spiritual blessings, merely is,—"Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find," "knock," and the door of mercy "shall be opened unto you." Can any offers, possibly, be more free and gracious? Now, suppose an individual of very great wealth, and of extensive worldly advantages and influence; and well known to be a person of veracity and benevolence, should publicly declare his will and readiness, to bestow from his possessions, *gifts* and *favours* gratuitously on all who would merely ask for them; we should feel perfectly convinced, that many applications would very speedily be made. The promises of the gospel, are certainly as free, and are, incomparably, greater and better, than in the case supposed: for they are made by Him, who is the Owner and Lord of Heaven and Earth; and the gifts promised, are infinitely more valuable than the others, for they are such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," of their richness and fulness of enjoyment; and what is the best of all, they are of *eternal duration*. Yet, we know, that myriads, who have these promises frequently and urgently brought to their notice, and have the blessings they hold forth, constantly within their reach, neglect even to ask to obtain them.—

Many, of such persons, are more or less frequently visited with *painful* thoughts and *apprehensions*, concerning *death* and *eternity*, feeling conscious, that they are not spiritually prepared for those awful realities: and have no hope, or fit qualifications, for the company and enjoyments of the heavenly state. What a proof does all such conduct afford, of the native recklessness of man, with regard to his highest and most enduring interests! The divine promises of spiritual blessings, are not only *free*, but they are held forth to *all*, who sincerely desire, and seek to obtain their fulfilment: for to all such the gracious declaration is made,—"whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." For all who lack wisdom, or any other grace, and sincerely pray, it is written, for full encouragement and confidence,—"He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." But let all such, see to it, that they ask with persevering earnestness, and in the full belief of receiving; for it is also written,—"let him ask in faith, nothing doubting," "for without faith it is impossible to please Him." Prayers, for *worldly*, or temporal gifts and advantages, may not always be precisely answered, for the Lord may see, that they would not be for the real benefit of the applicant; but we never can err, in asking for *spiritual* blessings, for the Lord is ever ready and willing to impart these, to all who solicit them, with faith and earnest importunity. Every burdened and seeking soul, may, therefore, be encouraged and cheered, by the numerous gracious promises of Him, "who changeth not;" and persevering in fervent supplication, they will experience their full accomplishment, in conscious pardon and peace. But every such soul must beware of cherishing or indulging in any known sin, or divinely forbidden course, for the same infallible word declares,—"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;" and gives the solemn command,—"Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded."

4. Searching and Obeying the Scriptures.—"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy Word." Ps. cxix, 9.——"Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." 11 v.——"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." 105 v.——"Hear instruction, and be wise.

and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." Prov. viii, 33, 34.——"Whoso despiseth the Word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment, shall be rewarded." Prov. xiii, 13.——"Take heed, therefore, how ye hear." Luke viii, 18.——"But he said, yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." Luke xi, 28.——"Search the Scriptures." John v, 29.——"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x, 17.——"Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Eph. vi, 17.

The above cited texts, plainly show, that it is indispensably required of every seeker of salvation, who has the sacred Scriptures within his reach, to search them diligently, for instruction, direction, and duty. They afford, indeed, the only authoritative rule and guide, as to religious faith and conduct. They have been graciously given to us, to be made "profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works;" and, also, "for patience and comfort," that we "might have hope." But, in regard to the duty enjoined on all who are favoured with these sacred oracles, to search them diligently, and obey their commands, it may be remarked, as was done, respecting *Prayer*, that vast numbers, thus favoured, greatly, or altogether fail, to avail themselves of the instruction, and other precious blessings they offer, by neglecting to look into them, to learn, and secure, the treasures they contain, and so freely offer. Here, again, is made strikingly manifest, the recklessness and folly of man, in his unregenerate state. He will study and toil, early and late, to obtain a knowledge of some worldly occupation, by which he may gain, and hoard up *wealth*, which he knows he may at any moment be compelled, by *death*, to leave to others; and, yet, though warned and invited to search the Scriptures, for durable knowledge and riches, he wilfully neglects and refuses compliance.

There are not a few, who have some desires, for obtaining scriptural knowledge, and direction; but, through indolence, or some other improper cause, they remain content to receive those blessings, chiefly, or entirely, in a second hand manner, through the ministry or instruction of others. They are like

the *seed* sown by the "way side," which is speedily carried off, by the birds of prey, or perishes under foot. They hear at the moment of delivery, but the Word not taking hold on the *understanding* and *conscience*, and not being treasured up in the *memory*, they lose such transitory instruction, almost as soon as they receive it; and never permanently secure the requisite and saving knowledge of "the things of the Kingdom." In order to obtain and increase that knowledge, there must be a *personal* and very frequent and attentive examination, of the sacred oracles, accompanied with earnest and believing supplications, that the Holy Spirit of *light*, and *love*, who indited them, may shine upon the understanding and the heart; and convey the truth with power, for instruction and comfort; giving, as scripturally declared, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." There must, also, be an immediate and unreserved submission and obedience, to all the announcements of that sacred revelation, both as to doctrine and practice. "Why, call ye me Lord, Lord," says the Saviour, "and do not the things which I say." He is declared to be, the "Author of Salvation," *only* to those "who obey him;" and has Himself announced, that they are "blessed" who "hear the Word of God and *do* it."

The awakened seeker of salvation, must also be frequent, in devout attendance, on public evangelical ministrations, and the services of the sanctuary; for divine wisdom commands,—"Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not;" and for encouragement, declares "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."

5. Meditation and Self Examination.—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night; that thou mayest observe to do, according to all that is written therein." Josh. i, 8.——"Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." Ps. iv, 4.——"I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search." Ps. lxxvii, 6.——"I will meditate in thy precepts." Ps. cxix, 15.——"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." 59 v.——"Ponder the path of thy feet." Prov. iv, 26.——"Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." 1 Tim. iv, 15.

During the very first exercises and efforts, for obtaining the divine pardon, and acceptance, as well as through the whole of Christian experience, it is essentially needful, that there should be frequent, and most attentive meditation, on the divine Word; and close, and faithful examination, as to personal inclinations and feelings; and the external conduct.—Reason, as well as inspired revelation, show the necessity of such a duty, and point to the spiritual advantages to be secured by its faithful observance. At the beginning and close of every day, some portion of time, however brief, should be devoted to its performance, and, most especially, should such exercises secure extended attention, on the *day of sacred rest*. This precious season, has been divinely set apart for our welfare; not, merely, as to bodily rest, but for the far higher, and more gracious purpose, of contributing towards our spiritual and eternal interests. All, therefore, who desire, or are seeking that pardon, and spiritual renewal, which, alone can fit them for a happy eternity, should endeavour, in some degree, to imitate the example of the pious psalmist, who said,—"I will meditate in thy precepts and have respect unto thy ways;" and constantly obey, the benevolent command of infinite wisdom,—"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

In every secular occupation, or pursuit, the individual engaged in it, very prudently, thinks it absolutely requisite, to advert frequently, and with special attention to the principles, and particulars of knowledge, relating to his business, so as to keep them fresh and prominent in his mind; and, thereby, to be able to apply them, when needful, to secure the greatest degree of advantage. He, also, frequently looks into all matters, transpiring within a greater or lesser circle, which have a bearing on his business; and often meditates, and calculates, plans, and acts, to the best of his powers and means, and all for the same purpose, of making his business the more extensive, secure, and prosperous. Should not, then, an immortal soul, in imminent peril of being abandoned to despair and misery, for ever, through its native depravity, and innumerable transgressions of the laws of a holy and just God, be far more *thoughtful*, *earnest*, and *active*, for obtaining the divine pardon, and those "durable riches and righteousness," which, through grace, shall secure its admission into a state

of eternal glory and happiness? The answer to every such appeal, will, doubtless, by all,—except the utterly reckless,—be to the same effect. But, alas, how few, though admitting the transcendantly greater importance of *spiritual* and *eternal*, than of *temporal* interests, yield, in practice, to the claims of the *former*, and truly and perseveringly comply with Wisdom's injunctions,—"Consider your ways, and be wise;"—"prepare to meet thy God:"—"giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure!"

6. Diligence and Perseverance.—"And he, (Jacob,) said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Gen. xxxii, 26.——"And he blessed him there." 29 v.——"But if, from thence, thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Deut. iv, 29.——"Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." Prov. xix, 15.——"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. xxix, 13.——"The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, unto the soul that seeketh him." Lam. iii, 25.——"And Jesus said unto him, no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke ix, 62.——"Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke xiii, 24.——"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. ii, 12, 13.——"He that cometh unto God, must believe that He is; and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. xi, 6.——"Wherefore, the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." 1 Pet. i, 10.

Of the numerous misapprehensions, and mistakes, which prevail regarding religion, there is none more frequent, and, if persisted in, attended with more ruinous consequences, than the one which relates to the *degree* of *effort* and *diligence*, which it is requisite for man to put forth, and maintain, in order to gain the divine pardon and acceptance; and secure his soul's salvation. There are some, who, from a spirit of *pharisaic* self righteousness, in a way of their own delusive supposition, and devising, think, and endeavour, to secure

their final salvation, by the performance of certain outward acts of *devotion*, *justice*, and *benevolence*; and by their general upright, and moral behaviour. Few, if any of them, will plainly acknowledge, that such is their dependance, but, through the natural deceitfulness of the heart, these external performances, in reality, form the chief, if not the only ground, on which they are secretly, and unconsciously to themselves, actually relying, for securing the divine favour, and their ultimate safety. On the other hand, there are those, and, probably even a much larger number, who, in what is called an *Antinomian*, and still *carnal* spirit, are cherishing a false and unscriptural faith, or hope, in the divine mercy, and the merits of the Redeemer; while, all along, they are involved, or enchained, in *worldliness* of desire and feeling, and are going to a greater or lesser extent, in the ways of sin and folly. As one has said of them, they have a "*loving* Jesus, often on their *lips*," but they have not a "*holy* Christ in their *hearts*." They have never, by the Spirit's power, been fully convinced of their native depravity, and the magnitude and guilt of their actual transgressions. The "fallow ground" of their hearts, has never been fully ploughed up. The *good seed* has been sown among *thorns*, which have prevented it from taking permanent root, and producing the fruits of spiritual righteousness. They have not attained to the true gospel *faith*, which works by *love*, "purifies the heart, and overcomes the World," and that induces and sustains that self denial, which the Saviour enjoins on all, who would follow *him*; and that required abstinence from all those "fleshly lusts which war against the soul." It is rather difficult to say, which of these *two classes* of persons, is in the most dangerous state. Both of them are in deep and pernicious error; and continuing therein, the eternal consequences will be equally ruinous. The Scriptural direction contained in one of the passages cited, as to man *working* out his "own salvation," while God *works* "in him," is directly opposite to both these errors; and if rightly understood, and faithfully and perseveringly carried out, by man, his present and eternal salvation, would, indeed, be fully secured. *Wisdom's* ways, as divinely declared, are, indeed, ways of *pleasantness* and *peace* and lead to genuine and permanent happiness. They produce a constantly equal movement, and composure of mind,

like to the unruffled flowing of a *gentle stream*, and secure a "joy with which a stranger intermeddleth not." But, still, it must not be disguised, that a truly religious course, is one of *self denial*, of all mere fleshly and vain desires, and appetites; and all sinful and foolish ways and actions. It is, indeed, through the constant exercise of a loving faith, in the gracious and holy Redeemer: and by obedience to the Scriptural directions on these most important points, of the *principles* and *motives*, and of *practical conduct*, that the peace and happiness above described, are divinely bestowed, and the "path of the just" is made to be, "like the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" and that, at last, an entrance shall be "ministered *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

From the whole tenor of Scriptural truth, as well as from the nature, and reason of the subject, it is perfectly evident, that he, who is seeking salvation, must, from his first setting out in the way, diligently and perseveringly employ, all the Scriptural means and methods enjoined; and constantly pursue the course prescribed, for securing that happy result.—The Word declares, that "the idle soul shall suffer hunger," but that "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat," evidently meaning,—enriched, abundantly, with spiritual graces. A great and arduous work is to be accomplished. Native *corrupt*, and *powerful* appetites, and passions, propensities, and desires, are, through gracious assistance, to be mortified and overcome;—*sinful* habits, associations, and practices, are to be wholly abandoned;—the *understanding*,—naturally dark, as to religious truth,—is to be *spiritually* enlightened and informed;—the desires, and affections of the *heart*, are to be changed;—the proud and stubborn *native will* to be subdued, and to be brought into subjection to the *divine Will*, and *guidance*. The *new* feelings and affections, are to be cherished and guarded;—earnest *prayer*, *circumspection*, and *watchfulness*, are to be constantly exercised; together with earnest *search* into Scriptural truth;—frequent and close *self examination*;—regular attendance on the services of the *sanctuary*, and other religious means and observances; with frequent, and serious *meditation*, on divine truth;—and regarding the *inward* spiritual state;—and the tenor and character of the *external* conduct. The duties which justice, and

mercy, truth and righteousness, at all times, imperatively, require; and as Scripturally commanded, must, also, be constantly regarded and obeyed. When all these exercises and duties are considered, and which, by the inspired Word, are required of man, when seeking his soul's salvation, it will be seen, that it is, indeed, essentially requisite, that, while being stimulated and assisted by divine grace, he should, on his own part, be perseveringly careful, to depart from all *evil*, and learn to do well, and strive to "lay hold upon the hope" set before him in the gospel, so as to secure pardon and peace, ever bearing in mind, the awful importance of the work of *personal* salvation, to which he is called, and the danger of final miscarriage. It may well be said, who, of himself, is sufficient for these things? Truly, none. But, blessed be the God of all power and goodness, he does not call any to such a work, without freely offering, and affording his own gracious and ample assistance. He has repeatedly and abundantly promised, that grace which is sufficient for every time of need, and by which he works in the seeking, as well as converted soul, "to will and to do of his good pleasure." By this grace, He enlightens, quickens, strengthens, and sustains, the soul; and if the *convinced* and *seeking* sinner, is faithful to that gracious assistance, the Lord will, assuredly, bring him fully "forth to the light" to behold the divine "righteousness," in the plan of justifying mercy; and will enable him fully to embrace it, "to the joy and rejoicing of his heart." Not, for a moment, must the convinced and unpardoned sinner, think of halting, or turning back, however long may be the delay of attaining that happy experience. He has turned his back upon the *City of destruction;* and the *City of refuge* is before him; and he is divinely exhorted and commanded, to flee to it, as the *only* place of safety. Let him remember, the words of the Lord,—"if any man turn back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him;"—"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." On the other hand, let him, through any darkness or distress into which he may fall, still persevere in the Scriptural course prescribed, for obtaining mercy; encouraging himself, with a firm reliance on the faithfulness of Him who is unchangeable, and has promised,—"If ye seek me, ye shall find me, when ye shall search for me, with all your heart,"—"every one that

asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

7. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for Pardon and Justification.—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Mat. xi, 28.——"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John i, 29.——"God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 16.——"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." 36 v.——"To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." Acts x, 43.——"And by him, all that believe, are justified, from all things from which ye could not be justified, by the law of Moses." Acts xiii, 39.——"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v, 1.——"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth."——"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x, 4, 9, 10.——"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ; and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. ii, 16.

From the moment of the very *earliest* desires and efforts for spiritual conversion, through the whole course of religious experience, *faith* in the fulfilment of the divine promises of pardon, and all other needed spiritual blessings, is essentially requisite; and is scripturally commanded. It may truly be called, the *foundation*, or main supporting *pillar*, of every profession of religion. The inspired Word plainly declares, that "without faith, it is impossible to please God;" and it is the strict command of the Saviour,—"Have faith in God." But, here, it may be well to notice briefly, what is to be understood by the religious faith, so fre-

quently mentioned and enjoined in Scripture. As a general explanation, it means, a full reliance on the *truth* and the *unchangeable* character, of all the declarations, testimonies, and promises, contained in that *sacred revelation*, and a belief, that they will, surely, be fulfilled, according to the plain tenor and terms in which they appear. Even from this brief exposition, it must, clearly, be seen, that to disbelieve or distrust, as to such fulfilment, is a direct sin against that glorious Being, of perfect truth, and righteousness,—who has given us that revelation of his will and purposes,—in supposing him capable of any defect of veracity, or sincere intention. All such unbelief, or distrust, is ever deeply injurious, and often fatal, to the soul that is involved in it, or yields to its blinding and ensnaring influence. Some such effects must necessarily follow, from any feeling or conclusion of that kind, for, as the individual can have no scriptural hope for forgiveness and favour, but from the fulfilment of the divine promises, as applying to his own case, he does, by his unbelief, exclude himself from any such hope; and, therefore, can have no reasonable ground for comfort, or for expecting to obtain any spiritual blessing. We are commanded to take heed, that there be not in us, "an evil heart of unbelief," lest we, thereby, become "hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin." Numerous instances are recorded in Scripture, of the dangerous and ruinous consequences of this sin of *unbelief*. It was, chiefly, from this, that *suffering* and *death*, were brought into the world,—through our first parents, *disbelieving* the plain command and declaration of their Maker; and *believing* the falsehood of the father of lies. It was *unbelief*, that excluded that generation of Israel, which was miraculously delivered from painful bondage, from entering into that land of earthly rest and blessings, which was so plainly promised to them; and caused them, with but a few *singular* exceptions, to perish in various forms, in the wilderness. It is declared, in Scripture, "they could not enter in because of unbelief." The nations, both of Israel and Judah, refusing to believe the warnings and threatenings of the Almighty, plainly and repeatedly addressed to them, by his prophets; and often attended with miraculous exhibitions, were left to the cruel inflictions and desolations of their enemies, and were carried into painful captivity. A Zedekiah, from not believing the

Word of the Lord, by his prophet, and yielding obedience to his inspired direction, was deprived of his eyes, and died, an afflicted captive, in a foreign and idolatrous land. Peter fell through unbelief, even in the presence of his incarnated God, whose many sublime miracles he had witnessed; and who had so plainly told him, of his own approaching seizure, and sufferings; and had, so pointedly, informed and warned him, regarding his sins of *unbelief* and *denial*. A Thomas was in danger of being lost, from the same ruinous cause; and many myriads, through all successions of ages, have been deeply afflicted, or eternally ruined, from *disbelieving* or distrusting the *warnings*, and the *threatenings*, or the *promises*, of Him who "changeth not;" and whose Word, like Himself, is infallible and faithful of accomplishment. We may, therefore, clearly see that in order to obtaining from God, any spiritual blessing, whatever, it is indispensable, that the most firm and implicit *faith* be reposed, on all the declarations and promises he has made, in that sure revelation with which he has so greatly favoured us.

For the awakened and convinced sinner, seeking forgiveness, and a conscious sense of the divine acceptance, there is only *one* mode of obtaining these blessings, as the Scriptures so plainly and repeatedly declare. It is *that*, of a single and confiding reliance, on the meritorious and *atoning sacrifice* and *satisfaction*, freely made by the Son of God,—the Lord Jesus Christ,—on our behalf, to purchase our pardon and peace, and eternal salvation and happiness. Without the exercise of this description of faith, no good desires or efforts, no turning from evil, and performing works of external morality, benevolence, or righteousness, will avail for securing those inestimable gospel blessings. It is the *only plan*, or method, of pardon, and salvation, which the God of Heaven has devised, and revealed; and through *faith* in which, any, under the various dispensations of the true religion, have ever been pardoned and saved, or will be, to the end of time. The Lord Jesus Christ, is declared by the infallible Word, to be the only "Name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." We are, there, told, that "he that believeth on Him is not condemned;" while "he that believeth not is condemned already;" and, that "whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." There are, even,

divine commands to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may be saved; and, for our encouragement and comfort, it is declared, that "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and, that "being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath, through him." The divine Saviour, also, freely, and most affectionately invites all convinced and burdened sinners, to come unto him for pardon and peace, saying,—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;"—"Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast him out;"—"If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink;"—"I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely." He is declared to be "exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance," and, also, to grant "forgiveness of sins." Let the convinced and penitent sinner, then, cherish full encouragement and hope from these and other gracious promises of the infallible Word; and seek, earnestly, for divine assistance to confide in them, with that personal and *appropriating faith*, by the exercise of which, he will most assuredly receive pardon and deliverance. Through the exercise of such a faith, his burdened and sorrowing spirit, will be effectually relieved, and made happy in a conscious sense of forgiveness and acceptance, through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, according to the gracious declarations,—"because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father;" "The Spirit, itself, beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God." If *continuing*, to exercise the genuine *faith* which works by *love*, and purifies the heart; and if *faithful* to the grace, continually sought and obtained, he will, as many Scriptural promises declare, constantly enjoy the light of God's reconciled countenance, affording him, an abiding peace and happiness such as an unregenerate heart can neither understand or attain. Possessing these inestimable blessings, he will still be encouraged, strengthened, and comforted, in his Christian course; and will, thus, be enabled, with *gladness*, to bring forth the fruits of evangelical righteousness, to the praise of that grace which has so delivered him; and will confidently rejoice, in the hope of beholding the "glory of God," and of inheriting "everlasting life."

SERMON VI.

ON

CHRISTIAN SELF-DENIAL.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt. xvi, 24.——"If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Mark ix, 43, 44.——"Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv, 27.——"He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me." John xii, 25, 26.——"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof." Rom. xiii, 14.——"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing, whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Rom. xiv, 21.——"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." 1 Cor. viii, 13.——"Every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things." 1 Cor. ix, 25.——"I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I, myself, should be a castaway." Verse 27.

Experience has shown, that in very many instances, the penitent seeker of salvation, so soon as he has received the inward evidence of pardoning mercy, is inclined to conclude, that his chief spiritual conflicts and troubles, are well nigh ended; and that he will thenceforth go forward in his Christian course, continually rejoicing, and that in every remaining

effort his enemies may make, they will be readily overcome. This is a *deluding* and most dangerous mistake. It is only *then* that the spiritual warfare may be said to have really and fully commenced. The "carnal mind," and "deceitful heart," are still, in a measure, existing; and the great adversary of souls, who knows what all of us are, by nature, is ever ready to apply his snares and temptations, and especially, to adapt them, to the previous most easily besetting sins, and propensities, of the pardoned soul. With some, the most powerful of such propensities, has been, the inordinate gratification of the bodily appetites; with others,—"the lust of the eye," in the various outward displays of pride and folly, in accordance with the fashions and customs of a vain and ungodly world; in others,—*envies*, *emulations*, and *ambition;* in others,—*anger*, and *hastiness* of *temper* and *expression;* with rash and uncharitable judgments and censures of others; with many,—a constitutional or habitual love of *ease*, and of *scenes* of merely *sensual* excitement and pleasure; and in others,—and in a large proportion,—the craving desire and endeavours for worldly gain; so often producing modes and practices of *secret dishonesty*. With not a few, there had been a special fondness for many and light associations and companionships, and for vain and utterly unprofitable talk, or what is, aptly enough, called *gossipping;* and with very many,—especially among the young,—the perpetual reading of *fictitious* and other *publications*, inimical to the sober and *moral* realities of life; and a love for vain and *corrupting public exhibitions* and performances, which are now so various and frequent. Most, or all of the new converts to Gospel truth and liberty, had been previously addicted to some, or many, of these special propensities and besetments. Each, and all of them, are of fatal tendency as regards the preservation of spiritual life, and peace in the soul, and making progress in a truly Christian course.

Every such recent convert, therefore, should examine, and truly ascertain, what have been his most powerful evil passions and propensities; and, with frequent prayer for gracious assistance, must, at once abandon, and constantly avoid, every *association*, *scene*, and *practice*, which has a tendency to revive or give place to any such previous evil besetments. The Divine Commands prescribe such a course, and it is at

the peril of his soul's peace and safety that he yield obedience. Here, therefore, constant circumspection and watchfulness are essentially requisite. The following, and other warning and gracious commands, must ever be borne in mind, and faithfully acted out:—"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;"—"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise;"—"Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." He who has professed allegiance to the Saviour, is, in Scripture, likened to the soldier, who has enlisted into the army of an earthly Ruler. Such soldier, has undertaken to yield and forego, *his own will* and *desires*, as regards his military duties, and service; and has agreed, in all respects, to submit to the will and orders of his Commander; and courageously and strenuously to contend for victory, over the enemies against whom he may be led. He is furnished with the requisite armour for that purpose; and he knows that if cowardly, or unfaithful, he will, surely, bring upon himself degradation and punishment. In like manner, he who has entered into the service of the Saviour, must implicitly yield up *his own will*, and take the revealed *will* and *commands* of his Lord, for his constant rule, and obedient observance.

Such recent convert must undergo the *initiatory* training and discipline. His spiritual renewal has only just commenced. The essential and *thorough* change, is yet to be accomplished. The previous unruly appetites, passions, and propensities, are to be overcome, and eradicated; and the external acts and indulgences they prompted, and produced, are to be entirely abandoned. The thoughts, affections, and feelings, which belong to the new spiritual nature, which has, by grace, been implanted, are to be cherished and enlarged; and the corresponding external duties, are to be learned, and obediently fulfilled.

There are, *now*, no open, or violent persecutions, merely for the profession of Christianity, but, still, as in all previous ages, the genuine convert has the remains of the native evil propensities of our common humanity; the alienations, and oppositions, of relatives and family connexions; an ensnaring and corrupting world; and the same powerful and malignant spiritual adversary, to contend with, and overcome.

The Christian life, may be viewed, as comprised under *two* general *divisions*, or branches, of exercises and duties. *One* of them, relating to an abstinence from all descriptions of sin and wickedness, and the *other*,—the cherishing of every gracious disposition and feeling, and the faithful fulfilment of every commanded pious, and virtuous act, and mode of holy and righteous conduct.

The present discourse, is intended, to treat, more especially, of the *first* division; and to specify and examine, separately, the principal particulars of *Self-denial*, and *avoidance of evil*, required of every professor of Christianity, by the spirit and precepts of that holy and benevolent system. These particulars, may be, appropriately, taken up, and examined in the order which will follow.

1. Companionship.—"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Prov. xiii, 20.——"Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Cor. xv, 33.——"Be ye not unequally yoked together, with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?" &c. 2 Cor. vi, 14.—17 and 18 v. "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you; and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty."——"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. v, 11.——15 v. "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."——"Now we commend you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." 2 Thes. iii, 6.—14 and 15 v. "And if any man obey not our word, by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."——"I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers."—"I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked." Ps. xxvi, 4, 5.

It is evident, from the foregoing sacred passages, that the associations and companionships of the convert to Spiritual religion, are of vital importance as to safety, peace, and pro-

gress, in his Christian course. Under most circumstances, it will be an arduous trial, to break away from all those of injurious and forbidden descriptions. It must, however, be done, whatever the struggle, in all cases, where the most intimate *family* or *other relations* with irreligious companions, will possibly admit of it; and even in these special, or excepted instances, as far as religious and benevolent duty to such persons will permit. Perhaps, there is scarcely any form of temptation to the recent convert, more ensnaring and dangerous, than that of continued and free association, with those who were previously his companions, in scenes and ways of sin and folly. They will, invariably, as a matter of course, by various means, endeavour to draw him off, from his more special religious exercises and duties. Some will assail him with the language of ridicule, and thus strive to produce a *shame*, regarding his religious strictness, and self-denial. Others, will endeavour to effect the same purpose, of weakening or destroying, his spiritual feelings and efforts, by pointing him to the *example* and *reputations*, of some mere *formalists* in religion, of such *moral* behaviour as is *current* in society. From such examples, they will urge upon the convert, that his spiritual exercises and *preciseness* are needless, or even *superstitious* and delusive. Others,—where the power and influence are possessed,—will employ them against him, in the way of open and constraining opposition, through the exercise of authority, or through means and considerations of pecuniary, and business descriptions. Some, or all, of these oppositions and trials, he will, inevitably, have to encounter, in breaking away, from previous evil companionships. As essential, therefore, to avoiding the reproaches of conscience, and retaining the gracious influences of the divine Spirit, he must,—in the exercise of prayer, for the needed support, and with courageous and persevering effort,—resist every such insidious, or open attack, so as to gain the victory.

Among many other injuries to the religious convert, from such intimate worldly companionship, there is, in attending to the vain and unprofitable talk of such unregenerate persons, or mere formalists, a violation of the command, for "redeeming the time;" for the due employment of which, as a most precious talent, we shall, all, at the last, have to render an account. We daily see, that the men of this world, are

constantly pressing forward; and employing their time to the utmost, for attaining their purposes; and will, scarcely, endure, even for a few moments, any conversation, or any employment of their time, altogether foreign to their worldly affairs, and active engagements; or which will delay, or prevent, the speedy and full attainment, of their ardently desired objects of pursuit. Surely, one, who has been awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, and of the awful realities of the eternal state; and has been brought to see, that unless he is made holy in heart and life, he cannot be admitted into the mansions of the blessed, but must be miserable forever, should be, far more earnest and diligent in the employment of his time, for securing the rewards and glories of the *eternal inheritance*. As an additional inducement to avoid all such vain companionships, and waste of time, he may be told, that such inconsistencies will hurt the feelings of the sincere servants of the Lord, who are united with him in church fellowship. And further, mere *worldlings* and *formalists*, who see his companionships to continue as before, will not fail to charge *him*, and other professors, with being vain enthusiasts, and, thus, as well as by reproaches, and in other modes, vital and experimental religion will be denied, or disregarded. For stimulating him, therefore, to avoid such hurtful companionships, and waste of time, let him frequently call to mind, these, and similar inspired warnings and commands,—"Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time;"—"A companion of fools shall be destroyed;"—"Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure."

2. Government of Speech.—"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people." Levit. xix, 16.——"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips, is wise." Prov. x, 19.——"He that uttereth a slander is a fool." Prov. x, 18.——"He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life, but he that openeth wide his lips, shall have destruction." Prov. xiii, 3.——"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stirreth up anger." Prov. xv, 1.——"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof, in the day of Judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matt. xii, 36, 37.——"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is

good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Eph. iv, 29.—31 v. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."——"Nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks." Eph. v, 4.——"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle." Tit. iii, 2.——"Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." James i, 19.—26 v. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."——"The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell." James iii, 6.——"Speak not evil one of another, brethren." James iv, 11.——"He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips, that they speak no guile." 1 Pet. iii, 10.

If the sins of the tongue are not, upon the whole, more *criminal* in their character, than those of other descriptions, they may, truly, be said to be more numerous. We all know, that they are often very malignant and aggravated; and produce the most afflicting and ruinous consequences. There is, indeed, scarcely any mode, in which, even, genuine religious professors, are so liable to offend, or at least to manifest inconsistency, as in the use of speech. Though not employing it, in wilful backbiting, slander, or evil speaking, in the usual meanings of the terms, yet, there is, at times, through unwatchfulness, or carelessness, *disparaging insinuations*, concerning absent brethren, or others, where there is no obvious call of duty, to require the information given, or the remarks which are made. This, to say the least, is inconsistent with that *love* and *charitable* spirit and feeling, which are so plainly inculcated by the principles and precepts of our pure and benevolent Christianity. But, supposing there are no transgressions in speech, of these descriptions; yet many of such professors, especially those who are naturally, or habitually *talkative*, often waste their speech, and time, on merely worldly or trivial subjects; not tending to any real edification; but quite unprofitable, as to speaker, or hearers, or in any other way.

There is a vast superabundance of *talk* in the world, through all grades and classes in society. Many persons, indeed, seem quite uneasy, or unhappy, unless they are constantly talking. It seems to be more needful, or pleasant, to them, to *talk*, than even to partake of necessary food, or of any other natural enjoyment. Most *worldly* persons, especially of the weaker sex, and, even, not a very few of religious professors, when they meet together, if time and circumstances will permit, *first* commence to talk of the weather, whether cold, or hot, clear, or cloudy, rainy, or dry, with the prospects concerning it, in future. Then, they pass on, to enquire, and give information, often *at large*, regarding their bodily pains and complaints, and those of their families, friends, or acquaintances, without having any particular design, or useful purpose in view, in giving or receiving such intelligence. *Next*, they will speak, and often largely dwell, on the several present particulars of local, or foreign news, political, social, or of other descriptions; remarking on the *merits* or *demerits* of men and measures, and on the several occurrences of which they discourse. The female portion of such persons, will, of course, have something to communicate, or remark, as to fashions, dress, the qualifications, or defects, and the conduct of servants; and on other trivial subjects, not at all tending to any useful end or purpose. It is well, indeed, if these *colloquies*, do not pass beyond such trifling matters, and treat of current *tales* and *disparaging*, or *slanderous* particulars, concerning neighbours, acquaintances, and others. The recent convert, and every other religious professor, should, with regard to the benefit both of themselves and others, ever carefully avoid, as much as possible, entering into, or even hearing, any such merely idle, or improper conversation. If obliged to be in the way of hearing it, they should,—as circumstances will permit,—endeavour to check, or suppress it, and turn the conversation to some good, and really useful subject. Though worldly and unregenerate persons, either do not *know*, or *care*, as to their accountability, at the final judgment, for all the *evil*, and even, merely *idle* words they utter, the Christian professor has learned, and should ever remember, the solemn declaration of the Saviour,—"For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." He should, therefore, in this respect, as well as

in others, be "steadfast, and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," endeavouring,—as opportunities, and other circumstances will admit,—to promote the interests of His kingdom, by exhorting and advising others, for their spiritual good. In short, let him, ever, regard, and comply with, the inspired command,—"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers;" and avoiding, "foolish talking and jesting."

3. Government and Employment of the Thoughts.—"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Ps. cxix, 59.——"I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love." 113 v.——"Deceit is in the heart of them, that imagine evil." Prov. xii, 20.——"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." Prov. xvi, 3.——"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Prov. xxiii, 7.——"The thought of foolishness is sin." Prov. xxiv. 9.——"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, &c. These are the things which defile a man." Matt. xv, 19, 20.——"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought, to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x, 5.——"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think* of these things." Phil. iv, 8.

By the constitution of the human mind, thoughts will, perpetually, be arising and acting on the various visible objects, and the subjects brought under notice; or suggested by the recollection of previous scenes, and occurrences; or in other modes, presented to the *rational* powers, or the *imaginative* faculty. The mental nature, from its very constituent principles, and qualities, cannot be entirely *quiescent*. It must, of necessity, always be, in more or less active operation. There are some, who care very little, if at all, about the character of their thoughts, but as pious Baxter has said, suffer them to wander, as *vagrants*, up and down the world. This is neither *pious*, *rational*, or *prudent*. It is the duty of all, to keep a watch on their thoughts; and to direct and employ

them, on right and truly profitable subjects. Their *first* and most deeply serious thoughts, should be employed, on the subjects which relate to their duties to their great and glorious Creator, Benefactor, and Saviour. None, who have any sense of religion, will doubt or deny this truth. As the *soul* of man, and *eternal* things, are of infinitely more relative importance than the *body* and the things of *time* it requires no laboured proof, to show, that the interests of the immortal soul, should occupy the thoughts, far more earnestly, and seriously, than any, or all of the affairs of this brief mortal existence. From a consideration, then, of the obligations we are under to our God, as well as with reference to our Spiritual and eternal nature, and happiness, we should constantly endeavour, to acquire to the utmost, all requisite knowledge, concerning that glorious Being, who is so fully entitled to our gratitude and obedience; and concerning our duties to *Him*, to *ourselves*, and to *others*. All such knowledge, may, and can be accurately obtained, only in that perfect revelation with which He has favoured us; and we are, therefore, commanded to search for it, *there* with prayerful and persevering earnestness, and diligence. Hence, it follows, that the thoughts of every recent convert, and other Christian, should be frequently, and most attentively employed, concerning those sacredly commanded duties, and in grateful contemplations on the mercies and blessings, he has constantly been receiving, from that divine and bountiful hand. The numerous vital truths of the inspired volume, should to the greatest possible extent, engage the mind in devout meditations, and in efforts for obtaining an enlightened understanding of their meaning and requirements, so as to be qualified for fulfilling all religious obligations and duties: as well as with reference to all other subjects, bearing on the soul's advancement in knowledge and grace. With many, it will, doubtless, be a difficult exercise, so to chasten and regulate the thoughts, as to fix them, for any definite period, on those purely spiritual subjects. By persevering efforts, however, with the aid of the promised *wisdom* and *grace*, from above, the required and profitable duty, may, and will be accomplished; and the mind, at length, be so brought under discipline, as habitually, to expel all vain and unprofitable thoughts, as they may be intruded, and keep the better thoughts still in exercise. But, further, the thoughts of the

Christian should frequently be employed, regarding the various subjects and movements, connected with, or bearing on religion, morality and benevolence, concerning which, by actively taking a part, he may be instrumental in promoting the interests and prosperity of his Redeemer's kingdom; and religious, moral, and social welfare generally. There are, indeed, in this, our day, very many subjects of pious and benevolent descriptions, to engage the thoughts of the Christian, so as to stimulate him to zealous activity, for the glory of his God and Saviour, and for the real welfare of his family and friends, his neighbours, and fellow beings generally. Wisdom declares, that "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

We are responsible for our voluntary and permitted thoughts, and shall, at last, be held to account concerning them, like as to our words and actions, as will be seen, from some of the sacred passages at the head of this section. The recent convert, and indeed every other Christian, may, therefore, adopt the prayer of the pious poet, though composed for the child:

> "With thoughts of Christ, and things divine,
> Fill up this foolish heart of mine."

And, also, frequently and earnestly, send up the universally suitable and excellent petition,—"Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name."

4. Love of the World, and Worldly Anxieties.—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Matt. vi, 19.——"And that which fell among thorns are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." Luke viii, 14.——"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away." Luke ix, 25.——"Take heed and beware of covetousness." Luke xii, 15.——"And they all, with one consent, began to make excuse. The first said unto him,—I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said,—I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said,—I have married a wife, and, therefore, I cannot come." Luke xiv, 18, 19, 20.

——"I say unto you that none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper." v. 24.——"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Luke xviii, 24, 25. ——"The sorrow of the world worketh death." 2 Cor. vii, 10.——"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Col. iii, 2.——"Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith; and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou O man of God flee these things." 1 Tim. vi, 8, 9, 10, 11.——"No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Tim. ii, 4.——"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John ii, 15, 16.

The disposition to seek enjoyment in worldly objects and scenes, to the exclusion, or neglect, of those which are Spiritual, is common to all, in the native, unregenerate state, and is one of the injurious consequences of the original offence. This corrupt propensity, begets many cares and anxieties, to obtain the means and advantages, whereby to secure, the desired worldly independence and happiness. In certain classes of society, with some, are *predominant*, the desire and ambition to mount to the highest possible elevation, of rank and influence, in the various departments,—political, or professional, commercial or literary. In the present state of society, probably, more than in any previous age, there is,—an almost universal desire to obtain *pecuniary wealth*, from a knowledge, that, almost invariably, this is the most ready and effectual means, for securing the objects which it is concluded will yield the proposed enjoyment. Hence the extreme and constant anxiety, and efforts, for the acquisition and increase of earthly gain; and that love of the world, and of worldly things, which are so entirely contrary to a spirit of piety, and

to all religious feeling and duty. The *worldly mind*, and the *Spiritual mind*, are directly opposite conditions, and can no more exist together, in the same individual, than fire and water agree, or any other, of the most discordant elements. The love of the world, and the love of God, and allegiance and duty to Him, can never be reconciled, on any terms whatever. He justly, requires, the entire and perfect consecration of all our affections and powers, to his worship and service. The first and greatest command is—"thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might:" and the Saviour has declared—"ye cannot serve God and Mammon." We are further told, in words so plain, that none can misunderstand them,—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." *When* will professors of Christianity, duly *estimate* and *obey*, these positive declarations, of a God of Truth and Holiness. His word, throughout, describes, and condemns a worldly spirit, and conduct, as *idolatry*. Such is their fit designation, for they yield those desires, affections, and services, to worldly objects, which are due to God alone, as our gracious Sovereign, Benefactor, and Saviour. Many solemn warnings and commands are given in the sacred volume, against a covetous and worldly spirit: several of which, are set forth at the head of this section. It seems, however, to be the opinion, or conclusion, of many religious professors, that such precepts, though so plainly and positively enjoined, are not to be regarded and obeyed in a *literal* sense, but are only to be understood, in a *figurative*, or *accommodated* manner. All such persons are grievously deceiving themselves. The words of these commands, are as *precise*, and *pointed*, and their meaning as plain for *literal* and *practical* observance, as any others contained in the inspired oracles.

But, not only, are we, cautioned and prohibited as to seeking worldly gain; but we are told, that,—"having food and raiment let us be therewith content:" and to cast all our cares upon Him, who careth for us." While following lawful occupations, industriously and honestly, faith may be confidently cherished, that He, who "openeth his hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing," will not suffer those who love and serve Him, to want anything needful for their real, tem-

poral welfare. Such avoidance of seeking worldly wealth and gratifications, and refraining from anxious cares and distrusts, as to a providential, needful supply of temporal wants, while diligently and lawfully employed, are most important particulars of Christian *self-denial*. None, are more frequent and formidable hindrances, in the course of faith and duty, of the recent convert; and as to the required entire consecration of every Christian, to the love and duty of his God and Saviour. The temptations to such a worldly spirit, and to seeking secular gain, are more ensnaring and powerful, to retard the progress in the divine life, than almost any others that can be named. Through their influence, myriads, who made a profession of the true religion, since the times of Balaam, and Judas, of Ananias, and Sapphira, and Demas, have fallen, and been eternally ruined. The Christian should pray against, and check every tendency towards a covetous and worldly spirit; and on the contrary, cultivate spiritual desires and affections; and be encouraged by the promise,—"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Let the recent convert, and every other professor, avoid all pursuits, occupations, and enterprises, which have a direct tendency, to stimulate, and encourage, the lust of gain, and a worldly spirit. The inspired advice of the Apostle Paul, to his spiritual son, Timothy, is good for every Christian;—"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

5. Forgiveness of Injuries, &c.—"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Matt v, 44, 45.——"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. vi, 14, 15.——"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Matt. xviii, 21, 22.——"And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So, likewise, shall my

heavenly Father do, also, unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." v. 34, 35.——"And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any, that your Father, also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." Mark xi, 25.——"Bless them which curse you, bless, and curse not. Recompense to no man, evil, for evil. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. xii, 14, 17, 21.——"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Col. iii, 13.——"See that none render evil for evil, unto any man." 1 Thess. v, 15.

This world is so full of sin and evil, that injuries of various descriptions, by one to another, are constantly occurring,—giving rise to the natural feelings of resentment, and desire of retaliation. In some particulars, the truly godly person, is more exposed than others, to insults and injuries. Sometimes, they are, inflicted, in the way of contempt, or ridicule, slander, revilings, or some of the various forms of injustice and oppression; often, in the family relations, by *irreligious* members, even in the nearest connexions. Such conduct accords with the Scripture declarations,—"The carnal mind is enmity against God,"—"As *then*, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is *now*." Even a consciousness of rectitude, and a sense of injustice of treatment, are apt to arouse angry and resentful feelings, and to incite to words and acts of retaliation. All these, as the Scriptures show, are quite inconsistent with the Christian spirit, and precepts; and by every believer, must ever be avoided. Here, *self-denial* is often difficult, and even *painful*, but it must be practised. In all such cases, prayer, circumspection, and watchfulness, are most especially needful; and a recollection of the words of the Saviour—"If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses;" and the strict commands—"Avenge not yourselves;" "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." We see, here, that our own forgiveness, by God, is positively suspended, on our forgiving others, for whatever injuries they may have done to us. There is no avoiding this alternative. It is, indeed, hard to *nature*, but *grace* can give the victory, which must in *that* way be sought, and can only, *thus*, be obtained. The passion of anger, is natural to all,

and if cherished and indulged, is one of the most fatal causes of the loss of religious peace and enjoyment: and one of the most ready means, of producing *spiritual* darkness and distress. The divine Spirit, who imparts and sustains, every grace the Christian possesses, is a spirit of *love* and *peace*, and will not abide in the breast, where anger is suffered to dwell: but will be grieved and depart. The forsaken individual, will, then, like Sampson, be shorn of his strength, and become as weak as any other man: and be liable to fall under every assault and temptation of his spiritual enemies. The Christian, then, for the honor of his Saviour's cause,—and the preservation of his own peace and enjoyment, must ever, as commanded, "watch and pray," and put away all "anger, wrath, and malice;" and seek for and cherish, that *charity*, which "suffereth long, and is kind;" which "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil," and "endureth all things."

6. Sensual Indulgences and Worldly Conformities. —"Be not among wine-bibbers, among riotous eaters of flesh." "Look not thou upon the wine, when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup when it moveth itself aright. At the last, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Prov. xxiii, 20, 31, 32.——"Take heed to yourselves, lest, at any time, your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life; and so that day come upon you unawares. Luke xxi, 34.——"If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Rom. viii, 13.——"Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For, he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall, of the Spirit, reap, life everlasting." Gal. vi, 7, 8.——"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame: who mind earthly things." Phil. iii, 18, 19.——"I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." 1 Pet ii, 11. ——"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John ii 16.——"These, be they who separate themselves, *sensual*, having not the spirit." Jude, 19. ——"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." Ps.

cxix, 37.——"And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your mind; that ye may prove, what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. xii, 2.——"In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves, in modest apparel; with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which becometh women professing godliness, with good works." 1 Tim. ii, 9, 10.——"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold; or of putting on of apparel." 1 Pet. iii, 3.——"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." 1 John ii, 15.

All mankind, in their native condition, may be denominated *sensual* creatures, being far more inclined to indulge their *fleshly* senses and appetites, than to regard and obey the calls, and warnings, and injunctions, of religion, or the suggestions of reason, or any moral considerations, or motives, whatever. This universal tendency, is one of the evils of fallen and corrupt humanity, and is among the most difficult to be overcome. It remains in a measure, in the converts by grace. In some persons, it is more craving and powerful than with others, according to differences in physical constitution, and various other circumstances. This proneness to sensual gratifications, gives rise, in the regenerated being, to one of the principal and most arduous struggles, between the *flesh* and the *spirit*. With some, it is, indeed, like cutting off a "right hand," or "foot," or plucking out, a "right eye." These figurative words of the Saviour, include, and apply to this conflict. With many, the temptations to such indulgences, are almost continually being presented; and, therefore, constant watchfulness and resistance are needed. In some the chief propensity is, to an inordinate or excessive indulgence in *food*, and *drink*; and in others, *sleep*, and needless bodily repose, or mere *indolence* and *inaction*. With very many, one of the most predominant sensual besetments, is the "lust of the eye," in what is called *sight seeing*, attending at vain and corrupting scenes and exhibitions, which have now, everywhere, become so extremely varied, and prevalent. All these, must be entirely avoided, by every true Christian. They are altogether contrary to the spirit and principles of Christianity; being one of the most *pernicious* modes, of that gratification

of the "lust of the eye," which is so expressly forbidden: and also a violation of the command, to "redeem the time." Such exhibitions, are chiefly, by corrupt and debased characters; and form one of the principal modes of corruption of morals, leading to intemperance, and profligacy, dissipations, and dishonesty, and almost every other vice.

Unhappily, many, or all of such exhibitions, are sanctioned and attended on, by some members of Churches, or church-going people, and are licensed, and patronized, and the openly *professed wizard*, and *legerdemain tricks*, and other profane, immoral, and corrupting performances, of such low and vagrant persons, are attended upon, by civil Rulers, and others in high positions. Such attendance, exhibits a most pernicious example, to youth, as well as others, in every class of society.

There are, *now*, two modes of sensuality, most especially prevalent;—the use of *strong drink* and *tobacco*. They may, both, be truly called, *merely sensual indulgences;* not being needed, in any degree, either as to health, or the better performance of any of the employments, or duties of life. Moreover, they are, both, more or less pernicious to body and mind; and in many other respects, according to the extensiveness of their use. Experience, in myriads of instances, of late years. especially, has fully shown these truths. Yet, still, unhappily, such is the power and influence of the "carnal mind," and *sensual* appetite, that vast numbers of professing Christians, and very large proportions, even, in the sacred Ministry, indulge in both of those modes of mere *sensuality*. This, they do, in the face of the plain, and known commands, to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" and to "abstain," even, "from the appearance of evil." Such false, and unfaithful professors, thus mind, and "fulfil the things of the flesh," though expressly forbidden to do so; and told, that, to be "carnally minded," will end in eternal misery. A professor of religion, *Minister* or *Member*, indulging in *strong drink*, and *tobacco*, is a character condemned, by every revealed principle and precept of the Christian religion. While these sensual practices are so prevalent among the careless and ungodly; and are so corrupting to the rising generation: and while the ruin of body and soul, and of every thing good and useful, is so constantly occurring from one of these sources of sin and misery, surely,

if from no other motive, or reason, than that of *example*, every professor of our holy and benevolent Christianity, should entirely abstain from such sensual and destructive practices. Christians are commanded to let their "*light*,"—that is,—their *good example*, and works, "shine before men." Instead of this, however, such unfaithful professors,—with the denounced "Woe" before them.—put "*bitter* for *sweet*," and "*darkness* for *light*;" and by their example, call "evil, *good*." They heed not, the "Woe," as to causing "offences," and the warning, that it were "better for them, that a mill stone were hanged about their neck, and they were drowned in the depths of the sea," than that they should cause one of the Lord's people to offend. That their *example*, influences and encourages others, both *in* the Church and *outside* of it, to commence, and continue the use of the ruinous drink, there cannot be a question. Many on beholding such example will reason and conclude like the *drayman*, who had delivered the strong drink at the Minister's door: and then, *tauntingly*, said to an abstainer, "you say, *drinking* will come to an end;—no, *never* while such men as *he*, uses it,"—pointing at the same time to the Minister's *dwelling*. Moreover, it is well known to be the deplorable truth, that vast multitudes, in all, of Ministers and Members of Churches, have become ruined and wretched victims, through this sensual indulgence. From the same cause, *scandals* and destruction of *influence* and *usefulness* among the *former*, are frequently occurring. Such *sensualists*, regard not the solemn warnings,—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;"—"Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh, reap corruption."

Another most prevalent cause of danger and evil to young converts, and indeed, to all other religious professors, is,—a *conformity* to mere worldly customs, and fashions, plainly inconsistent with the Spirit and precepts of revealed Christianity. This, is an evil, which is branched out in a great variety of forms. Let us, briefly, look at some of them. And, first, as to the apparel, and usual "adornments"—as they are *supposed* to be,—exhibited by the female sex. Doubtless, many will be ready to say, this matter of *apparel*, has nothing to do with religion, or religion with *it*. The Divine Spirit of

perfect wisdom, has not so judged. Knowing, as He does, the strength of the deep seated *pride* and *vanity*, which belong to human nature, He has, in His wisdom, and benevolence, spoken of this subject; and given cautions and directions, in several parts of His Sacred revelation. In one age of degeneracy and sin, the females of the chosen Jewish people, were divinely reproached and condemned, for their *vanity*, and *folly*, in their *apparel*, and *ornaments*, and "walking with stretched forth necks;" and for other vain and unseemly exhibitions. The Lord declared, that He would "take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments," and their "*round tires*, (or *hoops*) like the moon;" and their "chains, and bracelets," "mufflers and headbands:" their "tablets, ear rings, and changeable suits of apparel," and various other *vain* appendages.

Under our present, more Spiritual system, the New Testament revelation,—as seen at the head of this section,—gives special and plain directions, as to the apparel of female Christians. They are commanded, to "adorn themselves in *modest* apparel; with *shamefacedness* and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or *gold* or *pearls* or *costly array;*" and again,—"whose adorning let it not be that *outward* adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of *gold* or of putting on of apparel." Who, in the face of these plain commands of the divine Spirit, will be so *profanely bold* as to say, that this is a matter of no moment, as regards christian duty? Nor, will it be permitted to say, that such directions were only intended to apply, during any particular age of the Church; for the same sacred authority declares, that, "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for *our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Indeed, for many reasons which might be mentioned, it is more especially needful, that these inspired directions, should *now* be strictly regarded and obeyed. But, not only at ordinary times, are they utterly disregarded and violated, by religious professors, but, even, on the *Sacred Day of the Lord*, if we look into any assembly of professed worshippers; and of the most evangelical denominations, we see, an almost universal profusion, and varied display, of *merely* vain, ornamental, and extravagantly attractive female dress and appendages. These, plainly manifest, the inward *pride* and *vanity*, which have prompted and

produced, the gaudy and forbidden exhibition. So *universal*, is this display, that the Christian member, the *professedly converted one*; and the mere congregational attendant, can in very rare instances, be distinguished, the one from the other. In, nearly all, there is the really *unseemly*, and to others, on several occasions, the *inconveniently expansive habiliments*, and the same *artificial* appendages, *superfluous* ribbons and other *fripperies*, which may, as of course, be expected from a world, involved in ungodliness and folly; but which is altogether inconsistent in a Christian professor. But the great evil is that they are directly contrary to the inspired directions, against all such vain and extravagant displays, and against *conformity* to an irreligious and a corrupt world. Such inconsistent professors, as might be expected, also array their children, of every age, in a similar, or greater profusion of the same *fripperies*, thereby cherishing and encouraging, the natural vanity and folly of youth, instead of doing their best, by advice and otherwise, to check and restrain those native evil propensities, as the divine commands, as well as right reason, and prudence, require. In many instances, such parents, on their *baptismal* dedication of their children to the Lord, solemnly promised, and vowed, on their behalf, that they should "renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." Frequently, the subsequent headstrong, and improper conduct of the children, bring upon such parents the deserved chastisement, for their so fostering that native youthful vanity and folly, and, thus violating their own vows and christian duty. But, *then*, as in numerous other cases of error and misconduct, *regret* and *sorrow*, come too late.

Inconsistency and blame, may, also, justly, be imputed to religious professors of the other sex; for a similar vain display, in, at least, the *one* instance, of—the *gold chain* with its *accessories* so carefully arranged *across the breast*, as to attract and engage attention. That eminently wise and devoted servant of the Lord, the founder of Methodism,—in a discourse, expressly regarding the becoming apparel of religious professors, when enforcing on his people the passages, as to females avoiding the wearing of ornaments of gold, says very properly, that by a parity of reason, the same *prohibition*, includes the *male professors*, also. For several reasons, indeed, it may,

justly, be said, that in making such *open* and *vain exhibitions of golden chains and rings*, they are even more culpable than the other sex. All such displays by religious professors, more especially in *Official Characters* in the church, are plainly such an *imitation* of the conduct of a vain and ungodly world; and such an *encouragement* to youthful vanity, as are entirely contrary to the inspired commands, to abstain from the "lust of the eye and the pride of life," and from that *conformity* to the world, which is so strictly forbidden. Another mode of worldly conformity, by most religious professors, who possess the means of indulgence, consists,—in superfluous, and sumptuous furniture, and decorations of dwellings. Some of such inconsistent and unfaithful persons, seem, in these extravagant and vain displays, fully to equal the mere worldly characters, who possess about the same means for the like exhibitions. All such modes of conformity to the vain and injurious maxims, and customs of mere worldly persons, should be constantly avoided by every christian. Indulgence in any of them, will *inevitably* grieve the divine Spirit of love, and purity, and produce *decay*, or *entire loss* of the ever needful, quickening sense of eternal realities: and also of true spiritual enjoyment.

The various modes of self-denial, treated of in the preceding pages, are, plainly enjoined by divine authority. The recently pardoned sinner, as in the case of every other christian, is scripturally and solemnly called, to the faithful observance of *all* of them, as well as of all other forms of *self-denial*, as to causes and practices, injurious to inward and practical religion. He has been divinely called, and has solemnly engaged, to be the faithful soldier of Christ, and has taken upon him, the profession and badges, of bearing the Christian Cross, according to the command of the self-denying Master;—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The Saviour knows perfectly, that every professed disciple, is quite unable, of himself, to practice such constant self-denial, and, therefore, He has graciously declared, that, He "will not suffer" his people to be "tempted above that they are able, but will, with the temptation, also, make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it;" and that, His "strength is made perfect in weakness."

While observing such self-denial, the recent convert must perseveringly search the sacred volume, to ascertain the full

extent of the duties which belong to the various relations of life in which he is placed: and seeking, and relying on, divine assistance, must ever actively strive to fulfil those duties, with zeal and faithfulness, according to the inspired command to all professed disciples,—"Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

Throughout the exercise of self-denial, as to forbidden sensual indulgences, and worldly conformities, there must be fervently sought, and cherished, the *power* to exercise unwavering *faith* and *hope* in the *divine mercy*, for *courage* and *strength*, to overcome in every such conflict. All sincere and praying disciples, may, in every time of temptation and trial, confidently rely upon the divine assurance, that, "they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength." In reliance upon the gracious and encouraging promises, let them courageously go forward, in the path of self-denial, and active duty, and though for a time the way may be rough and thorny, through the remains of corrupt nature, grace can enable them, if faithful, to overcome. They will find, by happy experience, that the angry *lions*, they dreaded to meet and encounter, can, through mercy, be so subdued, as to do them no harm; and that the Lord will "bruise Satan under their feet."

As every evil habit, is strengthened and confirmed, by the repetition of the corrupt acts, and indulgences, by which it was first generated; so by the continued mortification, of evil propensities and passions, they will become proportionately weakened, and less painfully subdued. By persevering in this latter course, the believer, though feeling the "thorn in the flesh," may, in a measure, be able to say, in the words of an eminent Apostle,—"I can do all things through Christ strengthening me;" and "glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Merely *carnal*, and *self-deceived professors*, who have not entered in at the "*straight gate*;" or the right "door of the sheepfold," but have "climbed up some other way," will, of course, deny, or avoid, the *self-denial*, and *nonconformity* to the world, enjoined by Scripture. They will call it,—"*weak scrupulosity*," or "*needless singularity*." Describing *this*, as a *free* and more *enlightened gospel Age*, they will, even, in plainly forbidden things, *pervert* the example of the Apostle, and "become all things to all men," not, indeed, "that they may

save some:" but, merely, to avoid the *shame*, and *ridicule*, of, *not seeming*, and *doing*, like the generality of those around them. Some of them, will, even, stigmatize and reproach, the few self-denying believers, as being *puritans*, or *pharisees*, and "righteous overmuch." If they know the commands to Christian self-denial, you will not find them, *referring* to those commands. They have, in this matter, as on many other points of religion, formed standards and paths of their own, which will conform, as closely as *conscience* will at all permit, with the prevailing customs and fashions of the worldly people, among whom they dwell. They are like the disobedient professors of old, against whom the divine Woe was denounced, for calling "evil, *good*, and good, *evil*;" who put "*bitter* for *sweet*, and sweet for *bitter*." They have, either, never read, or heard, or have quite forgotten, the pointed declaration of the Saviour, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." The solemn announcement,—"Ye must be born again," and the *self-denial* as to all *merely sensual* propensities and appetites, and *vain worldly conformities*, are inseparably united, as *essentials* in the Gospel plan of Salvation.

Rejecting the delusive sentiments and example, of all carnal professors, let the sincere convert, who is anxiously desirous of having his soul sanctified, and finally saved, deny himself, as divinely commanded, "of all ungodliness and worldly lusts;" and strive for "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Let him, on *this*, as on every other subject, relating to his christian duties, and interests, ever take the sacred records, as his only *authority* and *guide*. The infinitely wise and gracious Author of that revelation, will, as He has promised, support and preserve him, in every conflict with his threefold enemies. He will make "darkness, *light*," before him, and "crooked things *straight*;" and prepare him, for those mansions of *love* and *peace* where, he will be able clearly to see, that the comparatively "light afflictions" and trials he experienced, while upon earth, have, through infinite wisdom and grace, been made instrumental to work out for him,—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

SERMON VII.

ON CERTAIN PERSONAL GRACES AND DUTIES.

1. Sincerity and Fidelity.——"I know also my God, that thou hast pleasure in uprightness." 1 Chron. xxix, 27. ——"With an upright man, thou will show thyself upright." Ps. xviii, 25.——"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee." Ps. xxv, 21.——"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. lxvi, 18.——"Unto the upright, there ariseth light in the darkness." Ps. cxii, 4.——"He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly." Prov. ii, 7.——"He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely." Prov. x, 9.——"The sacrifice of the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright, is his delight." Prov. xv. 8.——"Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" Micah ii, 7.——"Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them, may be clean also." Matt. xxiii, 26.——"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Luke xvi, 13.——"Let love be without dissimulation." Rom. xii, 9.——"Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in that thing which he alloweth." Rom. xiv, 22.——"If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." 1 John iii, 20, 21.

Among the moral qualities, none is more estimable, and of greater value and importance, than *Sincerity*. It may, indeed, be said to form the basis of all the other elements of moral goodness. Without it, the exercise and endurance of other virtuous principles, and feelings, are not to be depended on. So far from being a native quality of man, the opposite is universally true, for He who knows us thoroughly, has declared

of all, in the unregenerate state, that,—"the heart is deceitful above all things." Although, the term *sincerity*, is very frequently used, and in a general, or current sense, tolerably well understood, it may be well here, to define its true and comprehensive meaning; more especially, with reference to religious principles, and Christian morals and conduct. A learned commentator, in remarking on the word *sincere*, has written, that,—"it is compounded of the Latin words,—*sine cera*,—without *wax*, and applied to moral subjects, is a metaphor, taken from *clarified honey*, from which every atom of the *comb* or *wax* is separated." Carrying out, and further applying this metaphor, in a general way, *sincerity* means,—a true and faithful correspondence, between the inward principle and intention, and the outward conduct. As regards religion and morals, it is to be understood, as expressing a disposition of heart and mind, from which all the *wax* or *dregs* of merely selfish, corrupt, and deceitful desires and motives are absent; and there is the pure *honey* of a single desire and intention to perform what is pious, just, and benevolent, or otherwise excellent.

Among worldly persons, in the political, professional, mercantile, and, indeed, all other classes, *insincerity*, we know, is a very predominant quality; and is being perpetually exemplified, in word and action. Yet, it may seem rather strange, that though so common, or rather *universal*, there is scarcely any other evil quality, which, even, by all such persons, is more universally, and loudly condemned. Of all subjects, surely, *religion* is the one which should secure the most perfect and constant sincerity of desire and purpose; and, yet, such is the depth of native depravity, that there is scarcely any other subject, on which more *insincerity*, or *deceit* exists. For instance, examine the subject, with reference to devotional exercises, especially *prayer*, and you will find numbers, uniting with their *lips*, in the public confession of their sins, and of sorrow for their commission, and asking for *repentance*, and for power to forsake their *evil ways*, and to *amend* their lives according to the "holy Word;" and to be preserved from all the deceits of the *world*, and the *devil*, and all the *sinful lusts of the flesh*; and for grace to love God with all their hearts; and *worthily* to *magnify* His holy Name. But, even, at the very time of such confessions, and prayers,

you will see such persons, manifestly under the influence of such deceits, and vain and corrupt propensities. Also, follow them into the usual scenes and walks of life, and you will find them, freely, and habitually, indulging to a still greater extent in the various descriptions of temptation and evil, from which, under such solemn circumstances, they had *professed* a desire to be saved. What is all this, but the most palpable and gross *insincerity* and deceit? Such persons, if pressed, will admit, that the principles and precepts of the inspired volume, form the true and proper standard and rule for their religious and moral duties; and, yet, they are frequently, or even habitually, violating, or neglecting, many, or most of those duties. And, further, as occasion seems to require, they will, even, devise and offer, some seemingly plausible vindications, or excuses, of a worldly nature, for such violations or neglects. Such persons, though not so abundant in *fastings* and *prayers* as the *Pharisees* of old, are somewhat akin to them. These were reproached by the Saviour, for drawing "nigh unto God with their *lips*, while their *hearts* were far from him." Against all such characters, the divine censures and commands fully apply,—"Bring no more vain oblations;"—"When ye make many prayers, I will not hear you;"—"Make you a new heart, and right spirit;"—"Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes." We are commanded to,—"Vow, and pay unto the Lord our God;"—but, again, it is said,—"Better not to vow, than to vow, and not pay."

Such is the natural deceitfulness of the human heart, that, even, in the case of the partially renewed Christian, the motives of his words and actions, on some occasions, if closely analyzed and examined, may be found to have been, in some degree, of a mixed description. Some portion of the "*wax*" or "*dregs*" of selfish or worldly desire, or purpose, has been present—though not designedly,—among the "*pure honey*," of pious allegiance and duty. How needful is it, therefore, for all Christians, more especially, recent converts, constantly, to pray,—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me;"—"Try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Let them, also, remember the words of the Saviour, concerning the same subject of *sincerity* and *purity* of desire and intention,—"If, therefore, thine eye be *single*,

thy whole body shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light: but if thine eye be *evil*, thy whole body shall be full of darkness."

Another most indispensible Christian element, or principle, is,—*Fidelity*. This, plainly, means a zealous, and an undeviating perseverance, in the retention and exercise, of thorough Christian *integrity*; and in the constant and faithful fulfilment, of every duty, which our holy Christianity requires of all its professors, throughout all the relations and circumstances in which they are placed. No less than such entire and enduring consecration, is justly required of them, for they are not their own, but are bought with an *inestimable* price, even, by the *sufferings* and *death* of the *Son of God*; and they are earnestly entreated, and commanded, "Whatsoever they do, in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God, and the Father by Him."

2. Contentment.—"Let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." Prov. xxiii, 17.——"Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke xii, 15.——"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil iv, 11.——"Godliness, with contentment, is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world; and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content," 1 Tim. vi, 6, 7, 8.——"Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. xiii, 5.

A disposition of mind, which is perfectly contented with present possessions, and enjoyments, is very rarely to be found. Like as to other good qualities, it does not belong to man, in his natural and unregenerate condition. While in that state, his desires and affections, are invariably directed towards the things of this world, for securing that description of fancied happiness, which the force and prevalence of some native disposition, or other impulse, may impel him to strive to attain.

In the higher and middle ranks, the attainment of any one position in advance, almost immediately, engenders and en-

courages desires and efforts, for a further progress in the same course which has been fondly marked out, for securing the desired *ultimatum* of possession and happiness. Such is the case, with the votaries of ambition for rank and dignity; or political eminence and power; or for the highest and most eminent professional positions and offices. But very few of such persons, will rest contented, with any condition below the most exalted attainment, that seems within the bounds of possibility.

Among those, also, who are ardently coveting and seeking after worldly wealth, we see so many instances, as not to leave a doubt that scarcely ever do they find contentment, in any given measure of gain, but the craving for more, and still more, of the *idol* remains *insatiable*. With many, it continues as powerful as ever, even down to the time when death compels them, reluctantly, to bid adieu to all further desire, and hope of enjoyment.

In like manner, they who are seeking the desired happiness, in scenes and courses of mere animal indulgence, or of dissipation and folly, are still panting and seeking after, new and more exciting methods of such sensual pleasures. The wisest of men, who had in his power the most ample means of indulgence, in all the various modes of earthly enjoyment: and who, as he has told us, "withheld not from his heart any joy," but proved to the utmost, those means for affording him true contentment, and happiness, has recorded, for the instruction of all ages, this warning and saddening testimony,— "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought: and on the labours that I had laboured to do; and behold, all was vanity, and vexation of spirit;" "yea, also, the heart of the sons of men, is full of evil; and madness is in their heart, while they live, and after that they go to the dead."

But, passing on from all those extreme votaries of worldly honour, and wealth, or sensual pleasure, and looking into the ordinary classes, composing the great body of society, and throughout their various occupations, how very few are found to be contented with the *positions* and the *portions* of worldly means and advantages, of which they are at any time possessed! Nearly all, except the utterly reckless, seem, by their conduct, to be more or less dissatisfied with their present condition; for they are, still, pressing ardently forward, for se-

curing a still further increase of the means of mere earthly prosperity, and sensual enjoyment. Even in many of the sincere converts to spiritual religion, there remains a degree of such dissatisfaction: which, consequently, begets, and keeps in more or less anxious exercise, desires, and efforts, for extending such supposed means of happiness. The indulgence of such a disposition, must always produce a *blight*, or deprivation of spiritual life, and enjoyment. The cited texts show, that it is directly opposed to the divine commands for contentment with the providential lot, and the present measure of temporal possessions. Such a contentment as this, is perfectly consistent with industrious and righteous endeavours, to obtain reasonable and suitable means and advantages for children, and others, who have just and benevolent claims. It is, only, the want of contentment; or rather the *discontent*, as to the earthly lot and possessions; and also, the desires and efforts for increasing such possessions, for vain and other *improper* purposes, which are scripturally condemned, and which are, here, intended to be censured.

As a preventive of all such discontent, by the Christian; and for his encouragement and confidence, as to providential care and provision for all his real temporal wants, and his comforts, also he has the numerous promises of Him who is faithful, that his *bread* and all other *needful* things for this life, shall be duly, and sufficiently furnished.

That Almighty and gracious Being, whose are the "cattle upon a thousand hills," and the whole earth, "and the fulness thereof;" who "feeds the beasts and the young ravens, when they cry;" and fills the hearts, even, of the wicked, "with food and gladness," will never suffer those who are loving and serving Him, and pursuing an honest and industrious course, to want any of the means for the bodily sustenance, and other temporal welfare, both of themselves, and of those dependent upon them.

There are some, even among religious professors, who, by early reckless or improvident conduct, or in pursuing unlawful and pernicious employments, have brought themselves into depressed, or needy circumstances. Surely, these, ought never to give way to discontent, or complain of the pressure of such a condition; but, rather, should be ardently thankful, that they have been spared, and called into a state of divine

acceptance. They should diligently, and contentedly, endeavour to retrieve the past, as far as possible, relying on the same gracious promises, for the needful supply of all real temporal wants. Moreover, Christians should never forget the truth,—which not only scriptural history, and testimony, but numerous facts and incidents,—constantly occurring,—manifestly show,—that real contentment and happiness, cannot be measured, or secured, by merely temporal possessions. In all ages very many, who have possessed *these*, to the greatest extent, and were high in worldly positions, were, from some inward, or outward causes, among the most discontented and unhappy. On the other hand,—some in the *humble walks*, have verified the proverb, that,—"a contented mind, is a continual feast;" and also experienced the truth of the Scripture declaration, that,—"Godliness with contentment, is great gain." The most effectual method of checking and suppressing any discontent, as to earthly possessions, is, according to the inspired exhortation, to be constantly enlarging the spiritual desires, and sending forth the "affections, on things above."

3. PATIENCE.—"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Ps. xxxvii, 7.——"He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." Prov. xvi, 32.——"In your patience possess ye your souls." Luke xxi, 19.——"Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience." Rom. v, 34.——"Patience in tribulation." Rom. xii, 12.——"Be patient toward all men." 1 Thess. v, 14.——"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Heb. vi, 12.——"For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Heb. x, 36.——"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Heb. xii, 1.——"The trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work." James i, 34.——"If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." 1 Pet. ii, 20.——"Add" "to temperance, patience." 2 Pet. i, 6,

There is scarcely any good quality, which is so frequently required to be called into exercise, as *Patience*. Like the one

last treated of, if is not of an *indigenous* description. It is not a constituent part of the native human character. Some, it is true, are, by natural temperament, more or less *patient* or *impatient* than others, but all have in them, the evil seed of *impatience*, which, as occasions occur, produces the fruit of unhappiness, or other injury, either to the impatient person, or others, and often to both. In the ordinary movements and affairs of life, occasions are constantly occurring, which have a tendency to beget impatience. They arise on journeys,—in business transactions,—in conducting the various professions, trades, and employments;—in household matters, as regards children, and others, and in an almost endless variety of other domestic particulars. With some, they occur in public affairs; and at times, in conversations and discussions with friends, acquaintances, or others. On these last occasions, when differences of opinion exist, and keen arguments are advanced, such impatience may prevail, as even to give rise to a feeling of anger.

The immoral, absurd, or wayward conduct of those, with whom there is frequent or occasional intercourse, will often beget impatient feelings. In short, the occasions are innumerable, on which they may arise; and be carried into painful and injurious exercise. The christian, like others, is exposed to all such occasions, and causes of impatience. There are, however, in addition, some which are peculiar to *him*, and the more so, in proportion as he is faithful and obedient. In most situations, he will at times meet with, the ridicule, and sneers, insults, and oppositions, which mere worldly persons, or *formalists* in religion refrain from offering to each other. This difference of conduct, is, partly, because, such persons, in general, are of one mind, respecting temporal objects, and the customs and ways of vanity and folly. If the christian ventures to oppose, or admonish such persons, with *faithfulness*, though in a spirit, and in language, becoming and suitable, he will, in the family circle, or elsewhere, frequently be opposed; and meet with harsh, or otherwise offensive, personal remarks. Thus the temptation will arise, to impatience, and to such hasty and sharp expressions, in return, as are inconsistent with the christian spirit and character.

In the family and other relations, the irreligious, immoral, or otherwise improper conduct, of those with whom the

Christian has intercourse, or stands connected, will tend to produce impatience, and tempt him to employ in censure, or reproof, words of rash and undue severity. On all such occasions, he should call to mind, the inspired directions,—"Be patient towards all men;"—"In *meekness* instructing those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."

When witnessing the faults, absurdities, and follies, of irreligious persons, it will be well for him, as a preventive of any such impatience, and severity of censure, to call to mind, that such conduct, as a matter of course, may be expected of *them*, they, being of a corrupt world, and loving and obeying its maxims and ways; and *blind* as to truly religious principles, and duties. And let him also, recollect, that he, himself, was once in a state of similar, or greater blindness, and sin; and that it was through divine mercy and grace, that the better principles have been implanted in *him;* and that he has been brought to pursue a righteous course.

Even worldly and unregenerate persons, find it needful to exercise patience, in their business affairs; and in family, social, and other intercourse. and will, often discipline themselves, to avoid the exhibition of impatience, and the utterance of rash and angry, or reviling words. A regard to selfish interests, alone, will often induce them to refrain from such improper and injurious conduct.

The Christian, has the highest and best motives and reasons, to abstain from all impatience of spirit, and impropriety of speech and behaviour. He has been called, and has professed to forsake the vain and sinful customs and ways of a blind and besotted world; and to seek enjoyments of a spiritual nature; and to be diligent for securing the future blissful and eternal inheritance. He is no longer, in a spiritual view, a citizen of this world. Why, then, should he be disquieted and impatient, regarding any of its people and affairs? His abiding concern, and active efforts towards such persons, should be, for their spiritual good. He has been purchased by his Saviour, that he may be "redeemed from all iniquity;" and to be devoted, with all his powers, and means and opportunities, to serve and glorify that Saviour, by constantly striving to advance the interests of His kingdom upon earth. With

reference, then, to those interests, and to avoid all reproach, as to the holy cause he has espoused, and inconsistency regarding its precepts, and character, the christian should suppress every rising of impatience, and seeking and relying on gracious assistance, should carefully cultivate the patient and forbearing spirit. Let him often call to mind, that perfect *pattern* set before him who *patiently endured* "the contradiction of sinners against Himself;" and "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed Himself unto Him that judgeth righteously."

In waiting on the Lord, in prayer, and other means of grace, the christian must also beware, of ever suffering any feeling of impatience, to arise, if the graces and mercies sought, are not early imparted. He must, ever, remember that he cannot really deserve any good thing at the hand of the Lord; and, moreover, that he does not know what is truly for his welfare; and the most suitable time and mode for his receiving spiritual and other blessings. Let him still, plead, and confidently rely on the numerous promises, for the communication of the grace and mercies which are requisite, for support and comfort, and the performance of duty; remembering, that "He is faithful who has promised," and that, He "waits to be gracious." Though the needed blessing seems to be delayed, it will, as promised, "surely come; it will not tarry" beyond the time, which infinite wisdom and grace, shall see to be the best, for bestowing it.

4. Meekness and Humility.—"The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach his way." Ps. xxv, 9.——"He will beautify the meek with salvation." Ps. cxlix, 4.——"By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, honour, and life." Prov. xxii, 4.——"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Math. xi, 29.——"Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted." Math, xxiii, 12.——"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Mark x, 15.——"Be not high-minded, but fear." Rom. xi, 20.——"Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Rom. xii, 16.——"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with

all lowliness and meekness." Eph. iv, 1, 2.——"Submitting yourselves one to another, in the fear of God." Eph. v, 21.—"Let nothing be done through strife, or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other, better than themselves." Phil. ii, 3.——"Showing all meekness unto all men." Tit. iii, 2.——"Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." 1 Pet. v, 5, 6.

Of all the graces, imparted through a divinely regenerating influence, few, if any, are comparatively of equal importance, with *Meekness* and *Humility*. They may, indeed, be said to be the most essential, to the formation of a *complete* Christian character. They give to all the others, as by a *reflected light*, additional beauty and excellence. None, also, require a greater measure of divine power, for their production; and of frequent spiritual influence for their preservation and increase; inasmuch, as none are more directly and powerfully opposed, by native *pride* and haughtiness, and perverseness of the *will*. *Meekness* may be said to be the grace, which *underlies Patience*, and cherishes and supports it; and makes known *externally*, the value and beauty, which they both possess. In some persons, it is true, those native qualities, which are the opposite of meekness, are not quite so strong, as in others, but in all, a certain corresponding amount of provocation, is all that is required, to make such opposite qualities, extremely manifest. This shows, that a truly, and invariably meek spirit, is of *divine* origin; and requires the same sacred influence to sustain it. It is obvious, therefore, that, as in the case of all other spiritual blessings, it must be sought, and can only be retained, and increased, through fervent and persevering supplication, to Him who is "the Giver of every good and perfect gift." But, also, like as to all the others, *watchfulness*, and efforts, on the part of the Christian, are indispensable, towards its continued preservation; and for duly exhibiting it, in the outward conduct. As regards one and all of the spiritual graces, we are not wrought upon by the divine power, like unto mere passive *machines*, or *lifeless* bodies. Our own faculties, affections, and efforts, are to be employed, in conjunction. and harmony with, the divine regenerating influence, throughout the whole process of the soul's salvation

This truth is clearly shown, by abundant Scripture testimony. The Christian is commanded to "follow after," and to "put on *meekness*;" and to "show, out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom." For those, who, by native constitution, are afflicted with impatience of spirit, and a hastiness of manner, which are such impediments to meekness, it will be well when any provocation is offered, that before they speak, or act, they pause, and consider what *should* be said, or done, as most becoming the Christian spirit and example. This prudent, and every way proper exercise, will generally serve to prevent any ebullition of feeling and speech, contrary to that spirit, and painfully injurious as regards the suggestions of conscience, and the preservation of inward peace.

Similar remarks, throughout, are applicable as to the grace of *Humility*. This is both the *foundation* and one of the chief *crowning* excellencies of the Christian character. Whatever others of them may be defective, this must supersede and eradicate the native self-will and pride before there can be full and abiding spiritual peace, and enjoyment; and a due preparation for the acceptable worship and service of the Lord, here, and for his kingdom of bliss and glory hereafter. The Saviour has plainly told us, that there must be the discipline and submission, as in the case of a dependent and helpless child, before any can be qualified to enter that kingdom. Surely, every human being, whatever may be his position, attainments, or possessions, has the most obvious and powerful reasons, to dismiss *pride*, and cultivate *humility*. The distance is infinite, between the eternal and glorious Majesty of Heaven, and our sinful and helpless race. We are dependent on His *will*, for our continuance in life; on His *wisdom* and *goodness*, for protecting care, and every temporal blessing we possess; and on His *mercy* and *grace*, for every well grounded hope we can have, of happiness hereafter. He is infinitely *wise*, and we are naturally *ignorant* as to our real interests. He is unlimited in *power*; and we are dependant and *weak*. He is *forbearing* and *beneficent*; and we are *perverse* and *ungrateful*. Moreover, throughout all ranks and classes, we are, in very many particulars, greatly dependant on others, as to our various interests and comforts. It will be well for religious professors, as well as all others, to call these and similar considerations,

frequently to mind, as checks to self-confidence and pride: and for promoting humility. And, lastly, it may be urged, that in every case of relatively superior worldly advantages, mental endowments, or spiritual graces, and favours, the Scripture interrogatory applies, "Who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive: now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Let Christians, especially, bear also in mind, the command and the warning: "Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

5. Watchfulness.—"And in all things that I have said unto thee, be circumspect." Ex. xxiii, 13.——"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. iv, 23.——V. 25, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee."——"Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Matt. xxiv, 42.——"Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. xxvi, 41.——"And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Mark xiii. 37.——"Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darkness." Luke xi. 35.——"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching." Luke xii, 37.——"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall." 1 Cor. x, 12.——"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." Eph. v, 15.——"Let us watch, and be sober." 1 Thes. v, 6.——"Be sober, be *vigilant*, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v, 8.——"Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Rev. xvi, 15.

What the *eye* is to the *body*, for perceiving and avoiding danger, and injury, *watchfulness* is to the *soul*, for discerning impending temptations, and evils; and giving warning for resistance. It may, also, be likened to a *sentinel*, placed for the purpose of looking out for the approach of enemies; and for giving alarm to the forces prepared to oppose them. *Watchfulness* is constantly required in the christian warfare, to alarm and arouse the spiritual graces, for prompt and vigorous exercise, in the constantly occurring occasions of temptation and

assault. Very many christians, seem to forget, the invariable and alarming *truth*, that this world, is, for *them*, an *enemy's country*. The Saviour has called Satan, "the prince of this world," and has declared, of his true followers, that they are not of the World, and has warned them, to "beware" of the "men" of this world; and in their intercourse with them, to be,—"wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," and to,—"walk in wisdom toward them that are without."

Scripture clearly reveals, that the great spiritual adversary, can, and does, find access to the spirit and faculties of men,—though, as to the *manner*, mysterious to us,—and often *blinds* and *perverts* the judgment, and other powers: and tempts and leads myriads into transgressions and wickedness of every description. He can present alluring enticements to divinely forbidden objects, and pursuits; giving them,—as he was allowed to do, even to the Saviour,—a dazzling and seducing appearance: for the purpose of drawing, if possible, into impiety, worldly ambition, and the various other kinds of delusion, error, and sin. If permitted, he can assault the Christian, even with violent, profane and blasphemous temptations; also tempt him to licentiousness, intemperance, in various modes: and can, in all, arouse and aggravate, and put into external operation, the numerous corrupt passions, and propensities, which belong to native humanity. He also frequently stimulates, and induces, those who are under his influence, to tempt, and put stumbling blocks, in the way of the professed servants of the Lord, so as thereby to lead them to transgress;—some by words, and actions of *anger*, and *resentment*,—some by enticements to *sensual indulgences*, *vanities*, and *follies;* or in some of the various modes of sinful, and forbidden scenes, and dissipating courses, of a corrupt and ungodly world. Numerous Scripture declarations, and instances, plainly reveal, that in all these, and many other forms, the great adversary, can, and does, tempt and delude the children of men. The Christian, is never, altogether, exempt from such insidious and ensnaring assaults. To some of them, indeed, *he*, *alone*, is exposed; while as to others, they are presented to him, more frequently; and in a more subtle and powerful manner, than to the people of the world, who are, already, the servants of that great adversary of souls.

But, apart from *supernatural* evil influence, the Christian

has frequent occasion, in a greater or lesser degree, to contend with the remains of *innate* corrupt desires, passions, and propensities; and to watch and struggle, to suppress and subdue them.

And, further, living in a world, lying in wickedness, as the scriptures declare, and obliged, in many occupations, and scenes, to have some intercourse with those, who, in reality, belong to it, he is, almost continually, exposed to temptations and injuries from *them*, in a great variety of modes, some, of *malignant*, some, of *slanderous*, some, of really *persecuting*; and others, of alluring and ensnaring descriptions. In the family, and social relations, and in the various secular employments, and spheres of duty, he is exposed to some, or many, of such forms of temptation; and, *thus*, to fall into error; and be led to the commission of sin and folly.

Against all these, and every other temptation, and deceit of *Satan*, the *world* and the *flesh*, christians, must ever be watchful, and vigilant. They, must, also, be constantly looking, and praying to Him, who has given the promises,—"He will not suffer you to be tempted, above that ye are able, but will, with the temptation, also, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it;"—and "will bruise Satan under your feet." If faithful, He will "in all these things," of temptation and trial, make us "more than conquerors, through Him that loved us," and "gave Himself for us."

6. Self Examination.—"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." Deut. xxxii, 29.——"Commune with your own heart, upon your bed, and be still." Ps. iv, 4.——"I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search." Ps. lxxvii, 6.——"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Ps. cxix, 59.——"Let us search, and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord." Lam. iii, 40.——"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways." Hag. i, 5, 7.——"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi, 28.——"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not, your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." 2 Cor. xiii, 5.

Not only divine commands, as we see, by the above scriptural passages, but reason, and common prudence, also, require of the Christian, the performance of this duty of *Self Examination*. Even worldly persons, in pursuing their various secular employments, and purposes, consider it to be prudent, and profitable, to examine themselves, from time to time, on certain points, bearing on the particular pursuits, in which they are engaged. Such is the case, with the literary student; the *scientific*, and *professional* person; the *philosopher*, and *politician;* the *artizan*, *mechanic*, and *tradesman*, and persons, in the various other classes of society. They, all, know, that their success, and worldly prosperity, depend in a very important degree, on their advancement in skill and knowledge, in their particular employments, or objects of pursuit. Therefore, if at all prudent, they will, occasionally, examine as to the *proficiency* they are attaining, so that they may not be inferior to others; and fail of the success they are seeking to secure. The *maritime commander* daily examines, and calculates, as to his true position on the ocean; and the progress he is making on his voyage. In a similar manner, the *military chieftain* examines and exercises his skill, and ability, as to any advance, or disposition of his forces, under his command; and as to the prospect of success, in the campaign in which he is engaged.

Of all persons, the Christian should, as divinely exhorted, frequently examine himself, as to any advance or decline. This can only be safely done by bringing the habitual current of his thoughts and desires and the tenor of his conduct to the standard of revealed truth. It is by that system alone that he will finally be judged for his words, and works, and his everlasting destiny be decided.

While seeking after, and cherishing the graces, and attending to the exercises which have here been treated of, the Christian must see, that they are ever accompanied with a firm faith and hope in his God and Saviour, and an active fulfilment of all the duties which belong to the positions in which he is placed. Thus will he experience the truth of the divine declaration—"Great peace have they who love thy law;" and find, indeed, that,—"all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."

SERMON VIII.

MINISTERS AND PEOPLE.

1. Qualifications of Ministers.——"A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife; vigilant; sober; of good behaviour; given to hospitality; apt to teach; not given to wine; no striker; not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient; not a brawler; not covetous." 1 Tim. iii, 2, 3.——V. 6, 7. "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil."——"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Tim. iv, 12.——"Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. ii, 3.——V. 6. "The husbandman that laboureth, must be, first, partaker of the fruits."——"A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed; not soon angry; not given to wine; no striker; not given to filthy lucre. But a lover of hospitality; a lover of good men; sober, just, holy, temperate." Tit. i, 7, 8.——26, 7. "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness; gravity, sincerity; sound speech that cannot be condemned."——"Neither as being lords over God's heritage; but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet. v, 3.

Before proceeding to remark on the requisite qualifications for the Ministerial office, as exhibited in the above passages of Scripture, it may be well to observe—by way of information to those who have not a correct knowledge of the subject,—that the word,—"Bishop," contained in a few of the passages, means no more, than the ordinary term, "*Minister*," as used in the present day, with reference to a person, holding this office, in any of the various denominations of the Christian

Church. When these Scriptures were written, and for some time after, there were no such distinct offices in the Church, as the Archbishops and Bishops, which afterwards arose, and now exist. The words "Bishop," "Elder," and "Presbyter," as used in Scripture, and at *first* employed, were synonomously, and *interchangeably*, applied to the same office. This may be plainly seen, from several passages in the book of Acts; and in some of the Epistles. There is, indeed, a decisive proof, as to such meaning of the term,—*Bishop*, in the first chapter of the Epistle to Titus; where he is directed to "ordain *elders* in every City;" and, after describing their qualifications for the office, it is added, in immediate connection, for "a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God;" the whole of the language employed, applying to only the *one* office. A further proof, to the same effect, is afforded in 1 Pet. v, 6. Where he says,—"The Elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder." If any person in the Christian Ministry, at that time, was entitled to be *exclusively* named,—"*Bishop*," surely an *Apostle*, had the right to that appellation; and, yet, he styles himself, *only*,—"an Elder," like unto his brethren in the Ministry.

In, now, proceeding to the subject of the requisite *qualifications* for the Christian ministry, it may first be remarked, that for the ordinary occupations of civilized life, the generality of persons, possess such native qualities, as, with the usual training and instruction, will fit them, sufficiently, for the due discharge of the duties of such occupations. But, there are certain *special* and important offices, which require peculiar native powers, and also attainments, to qualify for fulfilling the obligations thereof, with the requisite ability and usefulness. In political life, many are qualified for subordinate stations, or commands, but not for *heads* and *directors* of high *state departments*. Many, in inferior, or subordinate scientific situations, are not fitted for the highest stations, so as to *plan* and *execute* great and complicated enterprizes and works, for which, certain mental qualities, of a very superior order, are requisite. In like manner, many are fit for subordinate employments, in the various learned, and other professions, who are not qualified for the highest, and leading situations in such professions; by reason of not possessing native qualities, of judgment, discrimination, or other endowments, suited

to enable them, to fulfil,—though with their best endeavours, —the *peculiar* duties of such higher situations, with the required skill, and beneficial effects.

Of all the offices and employments, involving *responsibilities* and *duties* to others, none is of equal importance to that of the Minister of religion. In order to the skilful and faithful performance of the solemn duties of his high and most responsible office, he must, in addition to spiritual and regenerating gifts and endowments,—be possessed of certain native qualities, in a *peculiar*, or high degree, to qualify him to be, an "able Minister of the New Testament."

To treat, first, of *spiritual* qualifications; the most indispensable requisite for such a Minister, is,—that he has been the subject of regenerating grace; has obtained the divine mercy, in the pardon of his sins; and is enjoying a state of acceptance with God. Without such spiritual experience, how is it possible, that he can be qualified, to advise and direct others, in the way of salvation? The divine Word declares, that,—"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The person, therefore, in the Ministerial office, who has not, by the operation of the Divine Spirit, been painfully convinced of his own sinful and lost state by nature and practice, cannot, possibly, be qualified to advise and instruct, in a scripturally appropriate manner, those who apply to him, under a feeling of the guilt and burden of their sins. He cannot really understand their language, in describing their state, nor duly sympathize with their distressing experience, having never undergone any feelings of the kind himself. He, therefore, cannot direct them according to the true scriptural plan, for obtaining deliverance and peace. Some of such unconverted persons in the Ministry, have endeavoured to persuade the *penitents* who applied to them, that they were under some delusion or mistake; and have gone so far, as to advise them to resort to worldly occupations and scenes, or even recreations, or *amusements*, as they are called, in order to obtain relief. Throughout all the other stages and particulars, of spiritual regeneration, and experimental religion, such a Minister, it is obvious, will, for similar reasons, be quite unqualified, to give the Christian convert such appropriate spi-

ritual instruction and advice, as will afford him the needed assistance and comfort. Hence, it is absolutely requisite, that he who officiates in the Ministerial office, should have been spiritually taught and led of the Lord, in the way of gospel salvation. Scripture declares,—"the husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits." This, evidently, means, that, as the husbandman must *first* partake of the fruits of the earth, to strengthen, and otherwise qualify him for the labours of the field, so it is indispensable, that the *Ministerial Husbandman*, in the gospel field, should have *first* partaken of the influence and fruits of the Divine Spirit,—"love," and "peace" and the other graces, before he can be suitably qualified, to labour with the requisite skill and acceptance, and with good success. Another Scripture says, he must not be a "*novice*." By this term is meant,—an *unskilful* person. The unconverted person, who has in part been described, is altogether a *novice* or *unskilful* person, in spiritual religion; and, therefore, according to inspired testimony, is altogether unqualified for the Ministerial office. The word will also, most fitly apply to those, who are both young in years, and of little, if, indeed, any religious experience: many of whom, but recently out of their *teens*, are, in these days, found in the Christian Ministry. All such novices, or unskilful persons, belong to the class, described as *running* before they are *sent;* and, also, answer to the Scriptural description, of the blind endeavouring to "lead the blind," and both *stumbling* and *falling* together.

But, supposing that the person occupying the Ministerial office, possesses the indispensable requisite of regenerating grace; and is not, in the full sense of the term, a *novice*, yet, he may not possess the qualities which form another requisite qualification, namely, that, of being, "apt to teach." Since the Apostolic Age, the divine Spirit has not so specially and powerfully wrought, as to qualify any, comparatively, large proportion of his genuine converts, for the varied, as well as important work, of the Christian Ministry. Some of such converts, though very pious, zealous, and humble, do not possess some, or perhaps any of the other requisite qualifications for that solemn office. In some, their native *imaginative* powers far surpass those of *judgment* and *prudence;* or there is a serious deficiency in accurate reasoning powers: or

in mental or moral clearness of conception, and discrimination: or in readiness of expression: or in *firmness* and *faithfulness* in announcing, and pointedly applying, the truth concerning prevalent sins and follies. Each of these defects, will, so far, disqualify every such true convert, for the office of a public religious teacher. The qualities which are the direct opposites to all such defects, with many other endowments, of a high order, are indispensable, for suitably qualifying for the great and varied work of a Christian Minister.

But, further, in addition to native mental endowments, and also spiritual gifts and graces, he ought to possess some good measure of a power to discern, and discriminate, as to human conduct and character. Also, such a knowledge of the prevalent evils, and vain, and sinful customs and practices, which are obstructing and preventing the progress of true religion, and the conversion of souls, as to enable him, accurately, and fully, and with faithful boldness, to explain and expose their destructive nature and effects.

But, if possessed of the foregoing, and other important qualifications, which might be mentioned, he must beware, that in desiring to enter the Ministry, his eye is "*single*," having *only* the design to promote the glory of his God and Saviour, conjoined with a love for souls, and an earnest purpose, to be instrumental in labouring for their salvation. No thought, or desire, for temporal *position*, *honour*, or *advantage*; no feeling of *covetousness*, *vanity*, desire of *human applause*; or of any other *selfish* description, must be allowed to enter his breast. These, and similar corrupt motives, have, unhappily, through every age, influenced and prevailed with many, in entering the ministry, and have led to their own undoing;—injured and afflicted the church,—caused reproach to our holy and benevolent christianity:—and in various other ways, retarded its progress in the world.

There are these further scriptural qualifications, essential for a Christian Minister, that he be,—"*not given to wine*;" that he be "*patient*," and "*temperate*." The words, in the original language, which in our version of scripture, are translated,—"not given to wine," are, by the *learned*, explained to mean "not *by*," or "*in company* with wine." In analogy and accordance with several other passages of scripture, the words,—"not given to wine, evidently mean, that he is not

to use any kind of intoxicating wine, as a *beverage*. The words do not relate, merely, to the *excessive* or even *habitual* use of wine of that quality, but they contain a full prohibition to any use of it whatever, for the purpose just mentioned. This entire prohibition is made clearly evident, by the following passage, contained in Prov. xxiii, 31, 32. "Look not thou upon the wine, when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." There is, here, no caution or warning, to be guarded, and "put a knife to the throat," as in this same book of Proverbs, with regard to *eating in moderation*, and to avoid excess; but immediately after the previous description of the afflicting effects of the use of the intoxicating liquor, the express command is given,—"look not thou upon the wine," &c. If he is not even to "look upon" it, surely, he is not to swallow it. This is the very strongest form of expression, that could be used, to signify, that a person should not partake at all, but should turn away, lest, by looking on its tempting appearance, he should be captivated and ensnared, and be induced to drink it. If, indeed, there were no other scripture prohibiting the use of intoxicating liquor, this passage *alone* should be sufficient to prevent every individual, who professes to be influenced and guided by the authority of the inspired volume, from ever partaking of it. The words convey an express and unqualified *prohibition* of its use by the same divine spirit, who has indited this command for the minister—"not given to wine." There is no subsequent scripture, *repealing* or *contradicting* this express prohibition. Neither on this subject, or any other, can there be any real contradiction, or inconsistency, in the sacred records. They are in perfect harmony, being dictated by the same infallible spirit of wisdom and truth. Under the christian dispensation, all are called to the highest degree of purity. Christians are called,—"Kings and Priests unto God;"—"an holy nation;"—"a peculiar people;" therefore, most assuredly, it must be contrary to the will and design of a holy God, that they should at any time partake of intoxicating liquor. They are commanded to avoid "*temptation;*"—to "abstain from fleshly lusts;" and even, to "abstain from all appearance of evil." The universal command,—"look not thou upon the wine," applies most especially and forcibly to

minister of religion; who, it must be presumed, are to be constantly engaged in one description or another, of religious exercises. Scripture declares "the Priest's lips should keep knowledge; and they, (the people) should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord;" that they "may put difference between holy and unholy;" and "teach" the people, "all the Statutes of the Lord."

If, therefore, the Minister of religion is not to use intoxicating *wine*, surely, he is not at liberty to use the *distilled* and more *ardent* liquors, and the *fermented* drinks, all of which are made by the *destruction* of articles given by the bountiful Creator for necessary *food* and *comfort*. And there is, also, this further religious reason in prohibition of their use, that they are always made by a *twofold* violation of the divine law of the *Sabbath*, by work being done on that holy day, in the preparation of these liquors. Without such twofold violation, indeed, they could not be made. But, further, the Minister is commanded to be "an *example* of the believers, in purity;" and, "a pattern of good works." While, therefore, there is so much crime, disease, and misery; so much affliction, death, and *ruin of souls*, continually occurring all around, through the use of intoxicating drinks, for this further reason, as to *example*, the Minister of religion, ought entirely to abstain from their use. It is painful to think, what numbers, in all, in the *Christian Ministry* have fallen, and been ruined; and that some, even in the most evangelical denominations, are still, from time to time, *falling;* and *scandals*, and other evils, are occurring, from the same sensual and ruinous cause. Even as to lawful things, an inspired Apostle has said,—"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." This is a fit and becoming example, for every Minister of religion to follow. To him, most especially, the divine command applies,—"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." This prohibition, of course, applies to the use of the poisonous drug,—*tobacco*. *This*, even beyond all others, is a *merely sensual*, and, properly speaking, disgusting practice; as well as most pernicious, in a variety of forms. It would be well, indeed, if all in the Ministerial office, were *innocent* as to this abounding evil practice. Surely, all both Ministers and members, who are

called, "*Wes'leyans*," could not, even, claim clear, or plausible, while indulging in that sensual practice: which is not only contrary to divine commands; but, also, to the *express* and *still existing rules*, of the self-denying, and devoted founder of that branch of the Christian Church. It is well known, that the use of tobacco, by *smoking* has, of late years, been greatly increasing; and especially among *young persons*;—many, even, in mere *boyhood*. To all of these, in addition to other attendant evils, the practice is, in various modes, most especially, injurious to their *bodily*, as well as *mental* powers. If there were no higher, or other reason, the one, alone, regarding *example* ought, surely, to be sufficient, to induce every *Minister* and *other professor*, of our pure and benevolent Christianity, to abstain altogether from this sensual and pernicious practice.

The general command to be "temperate," as a further qualification of a Christian Minister, evidently means, that he should use, "lawful things," of every description, in such a *moderate* and reasonable manner, that he may, at all times, and both as to *mental* and *bodily* powers, be qualified, in the best possible manner, for the most effective discharge of all his Ministerial duties; and that he may exhibit the best example, in all particulars, of a temperate and *holy* life. In connection with his Lord's commands, to "self-denial," and abstinence from all "fleshly lusts," he should follow the example of that great and devoted Apostle, who said,—"I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, that by any means, when I have preached to others, I, myself, should be a castaway." The qualifications for the Christian Ministry, which have here been treated of, on Scriptural Authority, are such, only, as are of the first or *highest* order. There are others, comparatively inferior, which should be possessed, but they need not be specified here.

On the whole, it may justly be remarked, that, as there is no office, or situation whatever, of such solemn importance, and responsibility, as that of the sacred ministry, so there is none, which requires, in the person who fills it, such a variety of high and excellent qualifications, as are requisite, to complete the character of the *true Christian Minister*.

2. Responsibilities of Ministers.—"Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them, all that I

commanded thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them." Jer. i, 17.——"They have healed, also, the hurt of the daughter of my people, slightly, saying Peace, peace: where there is no peace." Jer. vi, 14.——"Son of Man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die: and thou givest him not *warning*, nor *speakest* to warn the wicked, from his *wicked way*, to save his life: the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but *his blood* will I require at *thine hand*, yet, if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast *delivered* thy soul. Again, when a righteous man, doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity; and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because thou hast *not given him warning*, he shall die in his sin: and his righteousness which he hath done, shall not be remembered, but his *blood* will I require at *thine hand*. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not; and he doth not sin: he shall surely live, because he is warned; also, thou hast *delivered* thy soul." Ezek. iii, 17 to 22.——"And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and *prepared* not himself; neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with *many stripes*." Luke xii, 47.——"But as we were allowed of God, to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak: not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." 1 Thess. ii, 4.——"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. iv, 16.——"For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Heb. xiii, 17.

The infinitely wise and benevolent Creator, has so arranged concerning man, that through all periods of his existence here, he is, of necessity, under relations to his fellow beings. These relations, give rise to responsibilities of various descriptions, and degrees, according to the nature, or character, of such relations respectively. No person, of any class, or in any situation of life, while moving among others, can, possibly, be free of the *whole* of such relations; and of their consequent and respective liabilities. These, again, plainly, and forcibly,

call for the fulfilment of the duties, corresponding and appropriate to each particular case. The child, is under the *responsibility*, and bound to the *duty* of yielding obedience to the parent. The parent is bound to maintain, defend, and instruct the child; and do him all the good, both temporal and spiritual, which the ability and means he possesses, will enable him to impart. In like manner, in the relations of Husband, and Wife; Master and Servant; Rulers and People; and throughout the numerous and varied *social* relations, appropriate responsibilities and duties exist. From these, none can relieve themselves, or ignore, or neglect them, without incurring guilt; not only as to those to whom such duties should be performed; but as to the great Moral Governor of all, who has established these relations, and responsibilities, and required the fulfilment of the appropriate duties.

Among all the relations which create such responsibilities and duties, none is of such solemn importance, as the one between the Christian Minister, and the people among whom he officiates; and particularly, those more *specially* under his spiritual charge. Whether he is one, who has been divinely chosen and called to enter upon that most sacredly important relation, or has presumptuously intruded himself into it, still his responsibilities and duties are, in each case, the same, in character and degree. In reference, however, to performance of the required duties, there must, ever, be this vast difference between the two cases, that the *unqualified intruder*, cannot, possibly, fulfil them; and, therefore, he adds *this* guilt, to that of his reckless intrusion. This consideration, alone, were there no other, should induce all, who are thinking, or desiring, to enter upon the sacred office, to examine most searchingly, and prayerfully, not only as to their scriptural qualifications, but, also, as to the real, and *only motives* by which they are influenced, in regard to the spiritual and awfully important duties, which the office originates and demands. The solemn responsibilities, resting on all such messengers between God and immortal souls, are set forth in the most impressive language, in several of the texts, cited at the head of this section. They are most strikingly adapted, to command the thorough self examination, which has just been suggested. None of those solemn commands and directions to the prophets, of old: or to the spiritual messengers

under this Christian Dispensation, referred to any miraculous or prophetical powers, with which they were gifted; but, as those commands plainly express, they related, exclusively, to the warnings, and other religious instructions, to be given to the people. They are, therefore, applicable to Ministers of religion, and for the same purposes, in every age. Although the infinitely wise and mighty God, could, if He saw fit, dispense altogether with the services of men, in the conversion of souls, He has not so devised and acted; but has put the honour upon his professed servants, and, most especially, upon those He qualifies and calls into the sacred Ministry, to be instrumental for the spiritual good of others. As *their* ministrations, which relate to eternal interests, are, by comparison, of infinitely more importance, than any merely temporal concerns; so their responsibilities are correspondingly greater, than such as belong to any *secular* interests and duties. According, therefore, to what the Saviour has said,—"to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" so, as to those whom the Lord has *called*, or *permitted*, to become stewards or ministers of his household, he will, at the last, require them, to render a strict account, of the faithful discharge of all the duties thereby imposed and required. But as the greatest of the Apostles has said, in reference to the subject, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

In relation to endeavours to fulfil such responsibilities, it is manifest, that no "fear of man which bringeth a snare;" no desire of *pleasing* men, merely to gain their favour or *applause*; no design of averting or soothing their unjust resentments, or of yielding to their *pride* or *prejudices*, must be admitted for a moment. "If I yet pleased men," said the same inspired Apostle, "I should not be the servant of Christ." The *truth*, the *whole truth*, and the appropriate or *adapted*, though *displeasing* truth, must be declared, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." We see from Scripture, that it is at the peril of the minister's own soul, for eternity, that he is required, *faithfully* to declare the revealed truth of the glorious Sovereign and Judge. There must be no healing of "the hurt of the people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace" from the Lord.

There is a twofold responsibility resting on the Ministerial Teacher:—one to the great Lawgiver, on whose behalf he

professes to act; and the other, in relation to those, towards whom his ministrations are directed. In both views, he stands under the most solemn, or, indeed, *perilous* circumstances. To the Divine Ruler, he will be held to account, not only for the scriptural purity of his teachings, but, also, for their faithful *adaptation* to the state and character of the people, with reference to the revealed and eternal truths, by which they will finally be judged. *These*, last, also, have a right to hold him responsible, in an extensive degree, on both of those points, so essentially bearing on their spiritual welfare.

If he be one, who has neglected to blow the *warning* trumpet or to give it the *certain* and *appropriate* sound; or worse than all, if, as described by the Saviour and Judge, he has been "eating and drinking with the drunken;" freely associating with, and giving countenance and encouragement, to those engaged in vain and sinful worldly pursuits and employments; and, by example, affording sanction and approval to the "lovers of pleasures," and to scenes of dissipation and folly: his account will, indeed, be dark and deplorable, and his *doom* be, of the most terrific and agonizing nature. But, if, although correct in moral behaviour, he is the *intruder* already alluded to; if he has never been divinely and experimentally taught, the true Scriptural plan and methods of spiritual renewal, he cannot, possibly, fulfil the awful responsibilities of the sacred Ministry, so as to "give in his account with joy." No ignorance, or palpable unskilfulness, will then avail, in the least degree, to excuse or alleviate. It is declared, that he "who knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." He knew that his Lord's will was the conversion and salvation of souls, and if he neglected to *prepare himself*, by seeking and obtaining the requisite grace and spiritual knowledge, to qualify him to assist, by his ministrations and teachings, towards fulfilling that will of his Lord, his punishment, at last, as divinely declared, will, indeed, be most terrible and afflictive. The well prepared and zealous Paul, while deeply feeling the solemn responsibility of his Ministerial office, said, with confidence, in taking leave of the Ephesian Church,—"I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you, *all* the counsel of

God." He did not, thereby, refer to any miraculous or prophetical powers with which he was endowed, but spoke with reference *only*, to his instructions in the truths of the great salvation. Every individual in the Sacred Ministry, should always be prepared, to make, with truth, the same faithful and consoling assertion. *Then*, and *then*, *only*, will he be able to give in his account "with joy, and not with grief" and in so doing, will receive the cheering and blissful approval:—"Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

3. Preaching the Word.—"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet: and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Is. lviii, 1.——"Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them, all that I command thee." Jer. i, 17.——"And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear," Ezek. ii, 7.——"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." Matt. xxviii, 19.——"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." V. 20.——"To give them their portion of meat in due season." Luke xii, 42.——"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life." Acts iii, 14, 15.——"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." V. 19.——"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts vii, 51.——"I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts xx, 27.——"Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xx, 21.——"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." Acts xxiv, 25.——"By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii, 20.——"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Rom. vii, 9.——"That sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful." V. 13.——"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." 2 Cor. v, 11.——"The law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ."

Gal. iii, 24.——"Study to shew thyself approved unto God: a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. ii, 15.——"Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. iv, 2.——"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Tit. ii, 15.

Public instruction in the Divine Word is, undoubtedly, the most important and responsible part of Ministerial duty. It has been appointed by God, as one of the chief means for the conviction and conversion of sinners; and for instructing and guiding believers, in the way of faith and holiness. It is, therefore, essential, that the scriptural plan of salvation, and the mode and methods of such ministration of the divine word, should be *spiritually*, and well understood; and be accurately, and faithfully carried out, by those who fill the sacred office. Agreeably to that plan, the first requisites, as to all the unconverted; and the disobedient of every class, are, repentance, and forsaking all evil ways. Under the preceding dispensation of religion, these duties were made indispensable conditions, for obtaining the divine mercy and forgiveness; and they are precisely as applicable, and binding, under our christian and more spiritual system. These were the essential requisites prescribed, and insisted on, by the inspired prophets, whom the Lord, from time to time, sent to his people Israel, to reprove and warn them; and bring them back to his worship, and obedient service. The burthen of the cry of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, of Ezekiel, Hosea, and Amos, and all the others was,—as divinely commanded,—to the same effect. They openly and loudly proclaimed,—"Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die;"—"Repent and turn from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin;"—"break off your sins by righteousness;" "cease to do evil, learn to do well;" "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." All these preparatory duties, were made indispensable to their obtaining the pardon of their sins, deliverance from their enemies, and the other divine mercies and blessings their unhappy circumstances needed.

The bold and faithful Baptist, as the herald of our christian dispensation, commenced his ministry by crying aloud to all,—"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: and bring forth fruits, worthy of repentance." On enquiry, by the people, as to what they should do, he answered,—"he that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." To the publicans, (or tax gatherers) he said, "exact no more than that which is appointed you." All those whom he addressed, were the professed people of the Lord, belonging to the only chosen nation, who, for many ages, had had his Ordinances and worship and service established among them, by immediate Divine appointment. There were *Pharisees* among the multitudes who came to him for baptism, and instruction: and *these* he more especially, and severely reproached, and condemned, and called to repent and turn from their hypocrisy and wicked ways. Yet, many of these *Pharisees* and others, were very strict and regular, in their outward observance of worship, attendance on Ordinances, and performance of the divine ritual, and ceremonial appointments. But, they practically disregarded and omitted, the far *weightier matters* of the *moral* part of the divine law.

The Saviour, also, commenced his Ministry, with the same announcement to all,—"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And the greatest of the Apostles declared, that in teaching publicly, and from house to house, he testified "to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And, here, it may be asked, are there not now in *this* land, and every other, where *all* profess Christianity,—and of the most evangelical character too,—vast numbers, both members of Churches, and other attendants on the public ministrations of religion, who, as to strictness of outward observances, are far behind those Pharisees the Baptist addressed; and are nearly, if not quite, as neglectful and disobedient, as *they* were, as to those greater and *moral* duties, which are strictly enjoined, under our higher and more spiritual system? If this be the case, among *us*, and throughout all Christian countries, in the present day,—as is most deplorably true,—surely, there is the like need, that the performance of the same *primary* du-

ties, should be frequently and faithfully insisted on, in the *public* ministration of the Word. In nearly every congregation, if not universally, at least *nine tenths*, if not more, including both members of the churches, and others, are in such a state, as positively to require to be called to *repentance*, and to turn from their vanities and follies: and their other disobedient and evil ways. In the performance of this solemn and responsible ministerial duty, it is by no means sufficient, to deal merely in *general* terms, as to *prevalent* and *predominant* evils; but it is absolutely requisite, in all *faithfulness* to point to such evils, *expressly* and *by name*, so that the *trumpet* may give such a *certain* sound, that all may understand. This would be in accordance with the divine command,—"Show my people their transgressions, and sins;"—"rightly dividing the word of truth;" and "giving to all, a portion in due season." If there be no such *adapted* and *appropriate* application of the word, but merely declarations and denouncements, as to sins and transgressions *in general terms*, as is most commonly the case, none will make the *self-application* which is needed: and, consequently, *all* will remain as *quietly*, and *complacently* as before, in the practice of their respective and beloved sins, and vanities; and if they perish therein, their blood will, as declared, be required at the *watchman's* hand.

In each successive generation and age, there are certain transgressions of the Divine will and precepts, which are more prevalent than others. *These*, therefore, should be pointedly designated, and the inspired word which specially applies to them, should be plainly and faithfully announced, in the public warnings and instructions of the religious Teacher. In the present day, among the *male* professors of Christianity, there is almost universally prevalent, a *worldliness* or *covetousness* of spirit, manifested in the constant and insatiable striving, and grasping after *pecuniary gain;* and with nearly all, the indulgence in some, or most, of the various modes of merely *sensual* habits and practices. In the *other sex*, as enlarged upon in a previous discourse, there is, almost universally, the open and most extravagant exhibition of sin and folly, by *vain and expensive apparel*, and other personal appendages, directly contrary to inspired commands. Among all classes; and in both sexes, there is an extremely prevalent

indulgence in vain and dissipating scenes, exhibitions, and merely *sensual pleasures*. In these, as in many other particulars, they are fulfilling the inspired description of the last "perilous days," in which we are evidently living; and of which, it is declared, that the people shall be "lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, haughty, high-minded, and lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God." Does it not, therefore, seem most obvious, that in the faithful performance of Ministerial duty, the people should be pointedly, and, even, frequently warned and admonished, as to each and all of these prevalent evils, so injurious to the interests of true and practical godliness? It could not be objected, that such pointed exposure and admonition, would be of any *personal* or particular application; as though saying to any individual,—"thou art the man," or, "the woman." The condemnation and warning would be applied as to the *evils*, as divinely commanded, and not to any particular person present; and each would be left to make the *self-application*, or otherwise, as conscience might suggest. *Thus*, and thus *only* can the Preacher fulfil his awful responsibility and duty,—to declare to the people, generally, the sacred truths adapted to their state; and of conveying warning, reproof, and appropriate instruction, and giving the needed "portion, to all in due season."

In the plan of salvation, as we see by the infallable and unchangeable Word, *repentance*, and *turning from evil*, are expressly appointed, to *precede* justifying faith in the Saviour, and the divine forgiveness. All who are living in open disobedience, to any of the principles or precepts of Christianity, as revealed in the Scriptures, whether members of the church, or merely congregational attendants, must be considered, as in a state of rebellion, or of opposition to the divine Authority. It is, therefore, essential, that in the very first instance, they should be plainly and urgently called to repent, and turn from their evil ways, as a *pre-requisite*, or a condition of their coming to the Saviour, and believing on Him, to obtain forgiveness. The case may be likened, to that of persons in open and armed rebellion against the lawful government of their Country. No person will say, that *these* would have any right to ask, or could reasonably expect to receive, pardon from the government, until they had ceased from their

rebellious acts; laid down their arms; and declared their readiness to accept the offered clemency: and return to their allegiance and duty. Openly disobedient professors, and other enemies of the Lord, are to be considered and dealt with, in that character, as the scriptural plan of mercy prescribes; until they repent, and cease from transgression, and turn to the paths of obedience. Until they thus submit themselves, and render allegiance, there is no *promise* in Scripture for their obtaining *forgiveness*. Neither scripturally, nor reasonably, can they expect it; and, therefore, it should never be held forth to them, on any terms, which do not include that condition of *repenting*, and *forsaking their sins*.

Divine revelation is so full, and perfect, that it contains truths, adapted to the state of all descriptions of character, as regards religion. For the openly *ungodly* and *unrighteous*, there are awful *denunciations* and *threatenings*, to alarm and restrain them. For the *penitent*, desiring pardon, deliverance, and peace, there are gracious and encouraging *directions* and *promises*. And for the *careless*, and *worldly*, and the *disobedient wanderers* from "the way of understanding," there are solemn and alarming *warnings* and *exhortations;* and *threatenings*, also, in case of refusal to seek or return to the way of submission and obedience. To *these last*, such warnings and threatenings, should in the first instance, be directed and applied, in the public ministration of the word; *rather* than descriptions of the *beauty*, and *grace*, and *love* of the Saviour and his *sufferings* on their behalf. His gracious invitations to come to Him; and his promises of immediate pardon and acceptance, are held forth, *only* to *burdened* and *seeking penitents*. To such, *alone*, are directed, and are applicable the following, and others of his comforting promises,—"Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters and he that hath no money come;"—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink;" "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life, freely;"—"Blessed are they, who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." But these gracious and alluring invitations, are not in accordance with the *desires* and *feelings* of the *careless* and *worldly* or the revolted and *disobedient* professors.

They are not "weary and heavy laden," with a sense of sin and guilt;—*they* are not *thirsting* for "the water of life;"—*they* are not hungering and thirsting after righteousness;" after salvation *from sin;* and for the possession of inward and outward *holiness.* They are *asleep* as to *spiritual desires* and are at ease, in the possession and enjoyment of their sins and follies, their *vanities* and *sensual indulgences. For them* are appropriate and *required*, the divine and awful announcements,—"Tremble ye that are at ease; be troubled ye careless ones;" "woe to them that are at ease in Zion;" your iniquities have separated between you and your God; your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear;"—"Knowing, therefore the terrer of the Lord, we persuade men;" "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Such are the solemn and warning truths, which the divine commands, require should be *frequently* and *faithfully* declared in their hearing, in the *public* proclamation of the Word. But, *alas*, how seldom does the "*Trumpet*," as to *them*, give any such *certain*, *appropriate*, and *alarming* sound? They are constantly hearing of the sufferings of the Saviour, on their behalf; of his love; and of the riches and freedom of the great salvation he has purchased; but to *them* he appears not, in any *beauty* or *comeliness.* They cannot, of course, be offended at hearing of the sufferings of the Lord, to save them, but should they occasionally hear of the *self-denial*, and the *non-conformity* to the *maxims* and customs of an ungodly and sinful world, which his holy religion requires, they would, indeed, be offended, and would revolt from the thought or desire, of any bearing of the "*Cross*," though it should lead, at last, to obtaining the "*Crown of life*," which He has promised, and will bestow on those who have been faithful to the end. They are not "*sick*," through their sins and follies, but feel themselves "*whole*;" and, therefore, neither desire, nor seek, the great Physician. A wise and spiritual divine, has truly, and aptly, written, to the effect, that in addressing such persons, the first effort should be, to show them that they are really *diseased*, and in need of a *cure*, before proposing, and applying, the healing gospel remedy.

In treating of making "void the law through faith," he says:—"Now, the way for a preacher to make it all *void*, at a

stroke, is not to preach it at all. This is just the same thing, as to blot it out of the Oracles of God. More especially, when it is done with a design; when it is made a rule, 'not to preach the law;' and the very phrase, 'a preacher of the law,' is used as a term of reproach, as though it meant little less, than an enemy to the gospel. All this, proceeds from the deepest ignorance of the nature, properties, and use of the law. The ordinary method of God, is, to convict sinners by the *law*, and *that only*. The gospel, is not the means which God hath ordained, or which our Lord himself, used for this end. We have no authority in Scripture, for applying it thus; nor any ground to think it will prove effectual. Nor have we any more ground to expect this, from the nature of the thing. 'They that are whole,' as our Lord himself observes, 'need not a physician, but they that are sick.' It is absurd to offer Christ to them, whose heart is whole, having never yet been broken." The same Divine, in commenting on the conduct of those, who hold forth to all, indiscriminately, the promises of the gospel, has written:— "They know, and use, but one medicine, whatever be the cause of the distemper. They *preach the gospel*, as they call it. To give *comfort*, is the *single* point at which they aim; in order to which, they say many soft and tender things, concerning the love of God to poor helpless sinners; and the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Now this is *quackery*, indeed, and that of the worst sort. It is hard to speak of these 'daubers with untempered mortar,' these 'promise mongers,' as they deserve. They do, in effect, make 'the blood of the covenant, an unholy thing.'" They are, indeed, acting directly contrary to the revealed plan of salvation, and doing vast injury to souls, by thus applying the promises of God to all descriptions of persons, without distinction.

To the *unconverted*, the obligations and claims of the divine law, must be plainly applied, for as Scripture declares, "by the law, is the knowledge of sin;" and it is called, "our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ." All, in the natural, or unregenerate state, are *alive* in a *false security*, as the Apostle declared was his own case at the first,—but when the law, in its power, by the influence of the Spirit, is brought upon them, their carnal and delusive hopes of mercy

and forgiveness, are *slain* by its power, and they are compelled, by its effects on the conscience, to flee to Christ, for obtaining pardon and peace, according to the gospel plan. Thus, *slain* by the application and power of the law, and enabled, through grace, to believe on the Saviour, they find mercy and deliverance, and are brought out of the *carnal* and *captive* state, into the freedom, and love, and joy, of the spiritual life. Such is the divinely revealed plan, for the ministration of the word, towards effecting the conviction and conversion of unregenerate souls.

It must be obvious to all who have any spiritual discernment, and knowledge, of the state of the Churches, that in all of them, there is but very little *spirituality* of mind, and feeling; and scripturally pious, and practical *obedience*. This, is, indeed, the very general, as well as just opinion of those, who are spiritually minded, and are best acquainted with the nature of scriptural christianity; and its present state, in the countries denominated Christian. Many of these, both among Ministers and people, are sighing, and praying, for a revival of experimental, and pure religion; and in several quarters, special efforts are being made, for obtaining that blessing. It is manifest, from scriptural authority and instruction, relative to the subject, that, as regards *human* efforts, the most effective instrumentality, towards obtaining the greatly needed and gracious result, is,—that of the public ministration of the Sacred Word. In the performance of this solemn duty, it is requisite, that there should be a pointed, and faithful enforcement of the great scriptural truths, the best adapted to *alarm*, *arouse*, and *convict*, those who are "dead in trespasses and sins;"—to *warn* and *reprove* formal and disobedient professors, involved in worldly vanities and follies, and pointedly expose, and condemn such evils; and show their ruinous tendency;—and to *instruct* and *exhort* professors of every class, frequently and plainly, to the performance of all the *practical* duties of a religious life, as enjoined in divine revelation. To such *appropriate* and *faithful* ministrations, the Lord will make his own word, "like as a fire" and "like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces;" and will grant the fulfilment of His gracious promise,—"My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I

sent it." Fearless, and well adapted applications of scriptural truth, will always be greatly instrumental, in obtaining, and promoting, genuine and lasting revivals of pure and practical religion.

Before concluding this subject, it may be excusable, to offer a few remarks and suggestions, regarding *one particular* in the *manner* of delivering pulpit addresses. There seems to have been, for some time past, an increasing exhibition of extreme and varied, and occasionally even violent *bodily action* and *gestures*, on such occasions. *These*, of themselves, can, certainly, add nothing to the dignity, or impressive character of the subjects, on which such extravagant gestures are exhibited. They can, only, be plausibly excused on the supposition, that they are employed in conformity with what is, *now* rather a *prevalent* usage, in *some* of the Churches; or, else, that they accord with the example, of a few very eminent pulpit orators, who were, *in reality*, so warmed and carried out with their subjects, that, as it were, insensibly and *involuntarily*, they were led on, to extreme bodily action. To all instances of *extravagant* gesticulation, and varied *postures*, which are merely *imitated* or of a *simulated* character, the words of the poet Cowper apply:

> "In *man* or *woman*, but far most in *man*;
> And most of all in *man* that ministers and
> Serves the *Altar* in my soul I loathe all *affectation*;
> 'Tis my perfect scorn; object of my implacable
> Disgust. What!—Will a man play tricks? Avaunt
> All *attitude* and stare and *start theatric*.
> I seek *divine simplicity* in him, who handles
> *Things divine*; and all besides, though learn'd
> With labour, and though much admir'd by
> Curious eyes, and judgments ill-informed,
> *To me* is odious."

A *hand*, from time to time, placed on the *side*, and alternately changed while the other is *fully extended*, and soon both of them *firmly clenched*, and raised *above the head*, with violent action and other similar and varied *gesticulations* may pass with little or no offence, on a *public platform*, in declaiming on some *political*, or other merely *secular* subject; but they do not comport with the *solemnity* and

gravity which should ever accompany the annunciation of divine truth. In several instances it is but too palpable, that such *varied* and *extravagant* gestures, in *pulpit* addresses, have not at all arisen, from the *greatness* of the *sentiments* uttered, or the *ardent zeal* of the speaker; but have been called into exercise, as mere *bodily* exhibitions. These, may pass satisfactorily or perhaps approvingly with *light* or *frivolous* persons but to *serious* and *well informed minds* they will give more or less offence; and even may tend to lessen the power and effect of the truths in the declaration of which they are displayed. Timothy received the inspired charge,—"Let no man despise thee." Such extravagant gestures as have here been commented on, will, inevitably, in some, if not many, *irreligious* persons, produce a feeling, of some such description, which will lessen, or prevent, the good effect, which the truth might otherwise have upon them. As yet, such extreme and varied bodily action, has not become general, and is chiefly confined to the *younger* portion of the Ministry, and in the *dissenting bodies*. It may, therefore, be hoped, that the *chaste* and *becoming example* of the *elder* members of the sacred order will check, and prevent, the further increase of such *uncomely exhibitions*.

This particular, of action in the pulpit, is, indeed, of but small importance, compared with the subject previously treated of, that of—the pointed and faithful *adaptation* of pulpit discourses, to the various classes of characters to whom they are addressed. Here, it is, that the deep responsibility of the public Teacher rests. He is placed in the awful situation of an Ambassador, or Agent, between a holy and offended God, and guilty men; and as the cited Scriptures show, he is to "study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." He is to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all authority;" teaching the people, "to observe all things whatsoever" his Lord has commanded. He must neither *fear* the *frowns*, or *displeasure;* nor *seek* the *favour* or *approbation* of men, in declaring the truth of the Lord; but must deal faithfully with souls, ever remembering, that he must give a strict account of his spiritual stewardship. If *fearful*, *careless*, or otherwise *unfaithful*, his doom, as Scripture declares, will indeed be *terrible*

But, if, conscious of having faithfully fulfilled it, he may confidently, and joyfully, look to receive the promised approval, and reward,—"Well done, good and faithful servant;" and will be admitted to a *high rank* and *degree* in the glorious and happy mansions of the "everlasting inheritance."

SERMON IX.

ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT,

IN RELATION

TO RELIGION.

1. Civil Government; an Ordinance of God; and His Purposes Therein.—"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is the Judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. lxxv, 6, 7.——"He chose David, also, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance." Ps. lxxviii, 70, 71.——"By me, Kings reign, and Princes decree justice. By me, Princes rule, and Nobles; even all the Judges of the earth." Prov. viii, 14, 15.——"And it shall come to pass, in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle; and I will commit thy government into his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and

to the house of Judah." Is. xli, 20. ——"Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him." Is. xlv, 1.——"Behold I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, my servant: and will bring them against this land: and against the inhabitants thereof: and against all these nations round about: and will utterly destroy them." Jer. xxv, 9.——V. 11. "And these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years."——"I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour, wherewith he served against it; because they wrought for me, saith the Lord." Ezek. xxix, 20.——"They shall make thee to eat grass as oxen: and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men; and giveth it to whomsoever he will." Dan. iv, 32.——"O thou King, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father, a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour." Dan. v, 18.——"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God: whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God." Rom. xiii, 1, 2.——"I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. ii, 1, 2.

Whatever may be thought, or said, by infidels or sceptics, it is a divinely revealed truth, that this world, and all its affairs, are under the moral, overruling government and direction, of the Almighty and wise Creator. Although, since the first transgression, the whole of our race, has, by nature, been in a state of sin and rebellion, against its Sovereign and gracious Benefactor, He has not left us to ourselves, to become a prey to each other's corrupt desires, and propensities, without any means of restraint and discipline, towards securing our temporal welfare. For effecting this benign purpose, He has established the family relations; and through the medium of the affections, and by other means, has originated feelings, of the duty of *protection* and *support*, on the one hand; and of *dependence*, *subjection*, and *obedience*,

on the other. In a more enlarged manner of merciful arrangement, He has caused to be established among the nations and tribes of the earth, institutions of government, and laws and regulations, for the same benevolent and excellent purpose, of providing for their temporal safety and happiness. These institutions, or arrangements, if is true, have, in different ages, and among different nations, been in a great variety of forms, or modes, according to differences, as to the degrees of intelligence, and civilization, possessed by the people, but, on the part of the Divine Ruler, the institutions have all been designed for the same wise and merciful purposes. They have, indeed, almost universally, been conducted *unjustly*, and *oppressively*, through the evil passions, and the wicked conduct of men; but such injurious and afflicting results, cannot at all impeach the *wisdom* and *goodness* of the Divine Ruler, in regard to the design and establishment of the institution itself. Like all His other measures, devised and introduced for our benefit, and to mitigate our sinful and unhappy condition, it has, almost invariably, been perverted from the divine intention, and been made instrumental, far more to purposes of *pride*, and *ambition*, *injustice* and *cruelty*, than to those of *justice*, *peace* and *happiness*. Still, human government, of almost any description, is better than a state of entire freedom of personal conduct; or absence of all legal restraint. In the divine and overruling providential arrangements, as to human Governments, certain persons, in all ages, and countries, have arisen, who through superior native endowments, of skill, courage, and energy, acquired power and influence over their fellow men, around them; and thereby, secured their own ascendency: and thus, were enabled to establish such regulations, or laws, as to effect a state of dominion, or rule, more or less extensive and absolute, on one hand; and dependent and subjective on the other.

In the very earliest annals of human affairs, contained in the sacred records, we read of the appearance of "mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." Doubtless, these acquired superiority and rule, over those among whom they dwelt. Soon after the Deluge, Nimrod, the mighty hunter, appeared, who, as Scripture declares, "began to be a mighty one in the earth:" "and the beginning of his kingdom, was

Babal,' and other places, which are named. He was the first Sovereign of that kingdom, which afterwards became so powerful and wicked. He must, of course, have governed the people under him, by some regulations or laws. The early *patriarchal* governments, if they may be so called, probably, partook both of a *family* and of a *social* character; and, doubtless, were conducted under some prescribed, but few and simple rules. We, also, read in Scripture, that in the early ages, there were Dukes, or Chiefs, of Edom; Kings of Shinar, Elam, Admah, Zeboim, and of several other nations or tribes; all of whom, would, of course, have laws or rules, for the government and observance of the people, respectively, over whom they reigned. From Scripture history, and other sources, it seems probable, that Egypt, was the first country, where the nearest approach was made, to a regular or settled form of civil government. The *wisest*, most *beneficent*, and most *perfect* institution of the kind, however, which has *ever* been known, in our world, is, undoubtedly, that which was established by God, himself, over His chosen people Israel, immediately after He had rescued them from bondage. He, then, as we find in the inspired writings of the Pentateuch, and as afterwards declared by the excellent Nehemiah,—"gave and commanded them, *right judgments*, and *true laws*, *good statutes* and *commandments*." Thus, in His wisdom and goodness, He provided for their *civil rights* and *freedom*; their *peace* and *prosperity*, and *temporal welfare* and *happiness*, generally, in the land to which He was leading them, and in which, according to His promises, he faithfully established them. Many of these perfect laws, of the moral code, have formed the *pattern*, and been adopted, as the *ground work*, of the best laws and regulations, in the wisest, and most just and equitable Constitutions of Civil Government, which have been established in any part of the world. A learned Jurist, in referring to these *moral* laws of the Divine Being, has thus written:—"Considering the Creator, only, as a Being of infinite *power*, He was able, unquestionably, to have prescribed whatever laws He pleased, to His creature man, however severe. But, as He is also a Being of infinite *wisdom*, He has laid down, only such laws, as were founded in those relations of *justice*, that existed in the nature of things, antecedent to any positive precept. These, are the

eternal, immutable laws, of *good* and *evil*, to which the Creator, himself, in all his dispensations, conforms: and which He has enabled human reason to discover, so far as they are necessary, for the conduct of human actions. Such among others, are these principles:—that we should live *honestly;* should *hurt* nobody; and should render to every one his *due*. This law of nature, being coeval with mankind; and dictated by God himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times: No *human* laws are of any *validity*, if *contrary* to this: and such of them, as are valid, derive all their *force*, and all their *authority*, mediately, or immediately, from this original. In general, all mankind will agree, that government should be reposed in such persons, in whom those qualities are most likely to be found, the perfection of which, is among the attributes of Him, who is emphatically styled, the Supreme Being: the *three* grand requisites of *wisdom*, of *goodness*, and of *power: wisdom*,—to discern the real interest of the community; *goodness*,—to endeavour, always, to pursue that real interest; and *strength* or *power*,—to carry this knowledge and intention into action. These, are the natural foundations of Sovereignty: and these, are the requisites, that ought to be found, in every well constituted frame of government."

Several of the texts of Scripture, cited at the head of this section, expressly show that civil Governments, and Rulers, are Ordinances of God, more especially, the following passages in Rom. xiii;—"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power, but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God." "He is a Minister of God to thee for good. But, if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the Minister of God, a *revenger* to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Now, all this, was said, as to *heathen* and *idolatrous powers*, to whose authority and rule, the Christians were subject. We have seen, that similar inspired language was used, regarding Nebuchadnezzar, and Cyrus, also idolatrous Sovereigns, both of whom, are expressly called the servants of God, to effect his purposes. The Jews were commanded to put themselves under the yoke of the former; and to pray for the peace of the idolatrous city, whither they were carried, as captives.

The benevolent purposes of the Divine Ruler, by the ordinances of Civil Government, and Rulers, are, also, further made known, by the passage in 1 Tim. chap. ii, where Christians are commanded, to *pray*, and make "*intercession*" and give "thanks," for "kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." For these, and similar excellent purposes, our gracious God, has, in the benign arrangements of his Providence, caused these social institutions to be formed. If they were conducted according to these merciful designs of the Supreme Ruler, by *wisdom*, *justice*, and *equity*, on the part of *law-makers*, and *Rulers*, and by orderly and obedient conduct, by the people, such institutions, would, indeed, be greatly conducive to the welfare and happiness of all. It is true, that God, in His Supreme Rule, has, in a very few instances, *commanded*, and, in a vast number of others, has *permitted*, heavy inflictions and sufferings, by human Potentates and Rulers, both upon their own people, and on other nations: but, these events have been made subservient, for effecting His purposes of justice, or punishment, or discipline of other descriptions, in the carrying out of His own Government over all. As all powers and means, throughout the Universe, are subject to His control and command, He may, as He has often done, effect His own purposes, of whatever description, as well by one Government and Nation, as by any other instrumentality. But, no such oppressive or afflictive events, impeach, or affect, in the least degree, the wise and gracious *design* and *purposes* of the Divine Being, in causing government and laws to be established, for the regulation and welfare of the social state. The Ordinances themselves, are of God, as we have seen; and, as declared by Him, are intended for the welfare of men, that they "may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

2. The Civil Powers, Responsible to God.—"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men, must be just ruling in the fear of God." 2 Sam. xxiii, 3.——"For the Kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the Governor among the nations." Ps. xxii, 28.——"For God, is the King of all the earth." Ps. xlvii, 7.——"Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Luke xii, 48.——"For Rulers are not a terror to

good works, but to the evil." "He is the Minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the Minister of God: a *revenger*, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. xiii, 3, 4.——"Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." 1 Tim. vi, 15.——"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth." Rev. xvii, 14.

The truth, that Civil Government is an Ordinance of God, is clearly shown, by several of the passages of Scripture, cited in the preceding section. It must, therefore, follow as an undoubted conclusion, that the ruling and administrative Powers, in all such Governments, are responsible to the Great Ruler, who ordained them, for the faithful fulfilment of all the duties He requires to be performed, in the exercise of the authority entrusted. They are expressly called, the "Ministers of God," and are *ordained* by Him to be, "not a terror to good works, but to the evil:" and are not to "bear the sword," or power, "in vain: but are to "execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." In the Old Testament Scriptures, the Lord is called, "King of all the Earth, and Governor among the Nations." The Saviour has declared, "all power is given unto me, in Heaven and in earth" and He is called "King of Kings;" and "the Prince of the Kings of the Earth." No argument, therefore, is needed, to show, that Civil Powers, of every rank and degree, are responsible to the Divine Ruler: and that, if they fail to fulfil that responsibility, by not duly performing the duties, His revealed will and commands require, they are liable to His condemnation, and the appropriate punishment.

In all the relations of life, there is, indeed, a double responsibility involved:—one, to the *human* and *immediate* superior power; and the other, to the *Divine* and *Supreme Ruler*. Such is the case, in the relations of Husband and Wife;—Parent and Child:—Master and Servant: and, indeed, throughout the whole of the various other relations of human life, and its affairs. Whatever irreligious, and haughty, or selfish and unprincipled Rulers, and Civil Powers, whether of high, or low degree, may think, on the subject; or whatever *self-will*, or mere *human policy*, they may exercise, in carry-

ing out their authority, they are absolutely responsible to Him, who is "God over all," and "Prince of the Kings of the Earth," and of all inferior and subordinate Powers. If there had been no express scriptural assertion, or authority on the point, the declared words just mentioned, as to the Divine and Supreme Sovereignty, and the cited passage, that such Rulers and Powers, "are ordained by God" are quite sufficient, to show such direct responsibility to Him, for the righteous and faithful fulfilment, of the duties involved in the authority, with which they are declared to be invested. It was [illegible] or subordinate power, was [illegible] responsibility to the *Superior* Authority, by which it was created or conveyed. Such responsibility, invariably arises, upon the mere fact of the delegation itself. How much more marked, and binding, then, is the responsibility, in this case of the Civil Powers, as well as every other, to Him, who is the Supreme Ruler of the Universe? That responsibility of civil rulers, is indeed, of the most solemn and deeply important character; and, in each instance, must, of course, correspond in degree, and requirements, as well as final consequences, with the nature and extent of the powers and authority committed. The Divine Sovereign and Judge, has declared, that "to whom much is given, of *him* shall be much required." *This* He has said, with reference to talents, and means, divinely committed, or bestowed, for being employed to effect His will and purposes. The solemn announcement, is of *universal application*, and, therefore, fully applies, and with power in all claims, in the case of all civil powers.

It need, scarcely, be remarked, that the operations and influence of Civil Governments and Rulers, are very extensive, and powerful, either for *good* or *evil*: not only, as to *political*, and *social*, but as to *religious* and *moral* interests. It is, on these last points, that their responsibility to the Divine Ruler, is of the most solemn character. Regarding these interests, therefore, they will be held to the strictest account; and the consequences of their measures, will deeply affect, or rather *determine*, their eternal destiny; whether as to *reward* or *punishment*. A pious and faithful Joash, and Nehemiah [illegible] of similar character, in [illegible]

authority, for preventing and suppressing profanity, vice, and immorality: and in protecting, and encouraging piety, and the moral interests and welfare of the people, will receive the Divine approval,—"Well done, good and faithful servants." On the other hand, a Jeroboam, and an Ahab, a Herod, and a Felix, a Henry and a Charles of England, and a Lewis of France, with the multitudes of others, both in Ancient and Modern Ages, who, in making laws and decrees, and in executing power, have oppressed and persecuted piety; and *sanctioned* and *encouraged*, or voluntarily *permitted*, sources and measures, directly contributing to public vice and immorality, will, at last, experience the Divine indignation, and an everlasting punishment as awfully severe, as their crimes and neglect of duty, have been aggravated and ruinous. "The Judge of all, will do right," and finally, "render to all according to their works;" for, He is "no respecter of persons."

3. Duties of the Civil Powers respecting Religion.—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth: but thou shalt meditate therein, day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." Josh. i, 8.——"He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God." 2 Sam. xxiii, 3.——"And the King stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant, that were written in this book." "And he put down the idolatrous priests." "Moreover, the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah, and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away; that he might perform the words of the law, which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord." 2 Kings xxiii, 3, 5, 24.——"And Asa did that which was good and right, in the eyes of the Lord his God: and commanded Judah, to seek the Lord God of their fathers; and to do the law, and the commandment. Also, he took away out of all the cities of Judah, the high places, and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him." 2 Chron. xiv, 2, 4, 5.—— V. 6. "For the land had rest: and he had no war in those years: because the Lord had given him rest."——"And some

of my servants, set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day. So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jerusalem, once or twice. Then, I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you." Neh. xiii, 19, 20, 21.——"A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them." Prov. xx, 26.——"For Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Rom. xiii, 3.——V. 4. "For he is the Minister of God to thee for good. But, if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the Minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

It may be admitted, that it is rather difficult, as to many particulars, to fix the precise line, or boundary, of the right and duty of the Civil Powers, with regard to Religion. It is clear, that they have no right to interfere with any person's *private* sentiments, on the subject, or to persecute or distress him, in any manner, on account of them. Although, they are, even, of an infidel, profane, or immoral description, yet, so long as he refrains from making any such evil sentiments *public*, by endeavouring to instil them into others, his responsibility for them, is to God alone; and no human power, has any right to call him to account, or to deal with him concerning them, in any mode of punishment, or penalty. But, when he endeavours, in any way, to *disseminate* any plainly blasphemous, or immoral sentiments, directly against religion itself; and tending to demoralize society; and thereby impair, or destroy, its supporting principles, obligations, and claims, the case is entirely different.

A sense of obligation, and responsibility to a Divine Power, in some form or system of religion, is, undoubtedly, one of the chief and most indispensable supports, and safeguards, of social institutions; and of the general moral welfare, in a state of society. It follows, therefore, as a necessary conclusion, that on these grounds alone, of the *safety* and *happiness* of society, as regards all its highest and most important interests, the *Civil* or *Ruling Powers*, possess the *right*, and are under the *obligation*, to protect Religion itself, and its moral claims and duties. But, they are not at liberty to interfere with any

sentiments, or modes or forms of religion, which do not so directly tend to corrupt and injure society. On these points, by general admission, the law of right and duty by the civil power, as to religion, seems to be fairly and justly established. Now, applying these *first principles*, to our common Christianity, it must, surely, be admitted, that in all its moral principles, precepts, and duties, it forms the most secure foundation, and safeguard, of the social state; and of the moral welfare of the people, universally. Under that view, therefore, Christianity, as such a system, ought to be protected by the Civil Powers, in every Christian country; and its moral claims and duties, *recognized;* and their observance *secured*, in so far as they directly bear on the *safety* and *moral interests* of society. It will be admitted, at once, that every person professing Christianity, is bound to regard and obey, all its moral obligations and precepts, connected with, or bearing on, the relations of life in which he is placed. It would, therefore, be strange indeed, to say, that, while every individual in a State, according to the clear and positive revelations of Divine truth, is required, under the most solemn responsibilities, to believe in, and profess christianity; and to fulfil its moral claims and duties; the Civil and Ruling Powers, who form the head or *Government* of that State, are not required, in any of its laws or acts, to *recognize* christianity; but may, altogether, *ignore* its claims, and duties, though so intimately and powerfully, affecting the *moral safety* and *welfare*, of the whole of the population of the State.

It is too true, that human Governments and Rulers, almost universally, have, by their conduct, seemed to think, that their duty, almost exclusively consisted, in the regulation of *financial* affairs; or mere *secular politics;* and that the *protection* of Christianity, and its morals, was no part of their duty: or else, where they have interfered on the subject of religion, as they have often done, it has been in the way of cruel *persecution*, or of arbitrary and unjust *infringements* on the rights of *conscience* and *private judgment*. Both of these extreme and opposite systems, or methods of conduct, are clearly contrary to the revealed principles of religion, and its claims on such Civil Powers; and to the duties which it requires them to perform. They cannot, in any land called Christian, avoid the responsibility under which they are

manifestly placed, by divine revelation, to guard Christianity itself, and to rule according to its plain moral laws and precepts, bearing on the *safety* and *happiness* and general *welfare* of the people. No earthly Government, or Power, any more than an individual, can be at liberty, *to ignore* or *cast off* responsibility to God, both to *devise* and to *execute* means to promote the interests of His Kingdom upon Earth.

In the Theocracy which He established among His chosen people Israel, He amply provided for their religious, moral, and political, safety and welfare, by the perfect institutions and laws He gave them. The persons, He, from time to time, called to preside over them, were His Vicegerents, and were commanded to rule, according to that civil or political system, He had so established. We see, by one of the texts cited, that Joshua, their second Ruler, after their civil and moral Code was so divinely completed, was charged by God, in these words;—"This book of the law, shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein, day and night; that thou mayest observe to do, according to all that is written therein." The same command was, by the same Divine Authority, made binding on all subsequent Rulers of the Nation, both Judges and Kings; and their duties, accordingly, were the same as those comprehended in that charge to Joshua. Under that Theocracy, the Ruling Judge, the King, or other Governor, was enjoined by the laws of that Divine System, to protect the true religion; and to *prevent* and *suppress* all open *idolatry*, *blasphemy* and *profaneness;* all *incantations*, *sorceries*, and *profane* acts of *magicians*, *wizards*, and other *diabolical characters;* and to punish all those, who practised any such *impiety* and *wickedness*. They were, also, commanded, to adjudge, and punish, for all violations of the civil and moral laws of that divinely established code. All the crimes, and abominations, already mentioned, with many others, were dishonouring to God, and directly tended to the injury, and subversion, of the true religion; and, therefore, were divinely marked for *punishment* by the Civil Power. Some few pious and faithful Rulers, such as David, Josiah, and Hezekiah, carried these, and the other divine laws into execution, against those who committed the abominations and evils prohibited, but by far the greater number of the Rulers, under that sys-

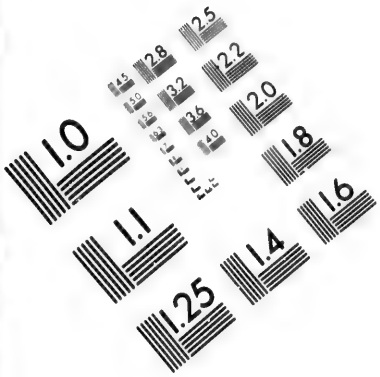
tem, encouraged and supported those abominations, and were reproved and condemned by the prophets,—inspired and commanded for the purpose,—and were, by the divine judgments, punished for their profanity and wickedness.

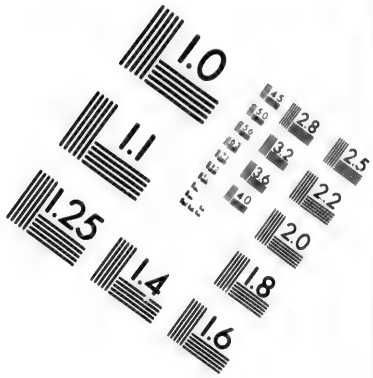
Although that early Theocracy ended, many ages ago, yet, many of its principles, and most of its *moral* claims and duties, are equally binding under our Christian system. One of the Scriptures cited in this Discourse, is the following command, which applies, and is of full force, throughout all ages, and under all dispensations of Religion, and forms of Government:—"He that ruleth over men, must be just; ruling in the fear of God." The following passages of the New Testament Scriptures, are, even, more pointed and explicit, to the same effect:—"For Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the Power; do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God to thee for *good*. But, if thou do that which is *evil*, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the Minister of God, a *revenger* to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." All these sacred announcements, as to Civil Rulers and Powers, apply to such persons, of *every degree*, and in *every age*. Being as here declared, "the Ministers of God," they are, of course, responsible to Him, and bound to fulfil faithfully, the duties of the offices with which He has invested them. Their duties are clearly shown, in these cited passages. To the "*good*," or obedient, they are to be the "Ministers of God for *good*;" but to be "a terror to *evil works*:" and to be "the Ministers of God: *revenging* to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Here, then, in few, but very *comprehensive* words, their duties, both as to *good* and *evil* doers, and *good* and *evil* works, are fully defined and declared. In accordance, therefore, with these inspired declarations, it is the plain duty of the Ruling Powers, in every christian country, to protect the true religion: and to *suppress* and *punish infidelity*, *vice* and *immorality*; and to frame and carry out, the civil Institutions and laws, in the best manner possible, for effecting these excellent purposes; and having, as divinely required, a regard both to the honor of the Divine Being, and the *protection* and *moral welfare* of the people universally.

Viewing the subject, therefore, [illegible] as to those who are

invested with the power of *making laws*, it is manifest, according to scripture, that, as they are *ordained* of God, for this purpose, it is their duty, to make such laws *only*, on religious and moral subjects, as are designed, and have a tendency, to prevent and suppress *evil*, and promote what is *good*;—such as will be for the *real benefit* of the people. In all Christian Countries, such laws,—as already shown from scripture,—should, not only be consistent with the principles, claims and obligations of christianity, but as the *true* religion it should be legally protected against *open infidelity*, *blasphemy*, and *profaneness*; and, further, there should be laws, adapted for the *prevention* and *suppression* of all these, and similar abominations; and of all public causes and means which produce *crime*, *profligacy*, and *immorality* among the people; and, thus, endanger the social fabric, and destroy, or injure, its best interests. Under our British Constitution, those invested with the powers of legislation, have *recognized* their responsibility to God, and to the people, to make such laws; and accordingly, ages ago, they passed enactments, which have been continued to the present day, providing for the punishment of *open blasphemy* and *profaneness*, of various kinds, directly against the Divine Being, and His Supreme Government; and, also, for preventing and punishing several other offences, directly tending to corrupt and demoralize society. Removing vicious agencies by legislative action, is, indeed, much more needed and suitable, than any *direct* measures for the promotion of religion. Considering the evil passions, and the prejudices of men, any *direct* and *special* legislation on religious subjects, would,—as has often occurred,—be as likely to produce *injury*, as *advantage* to the Sacred Cause itself.

Let us, now, look at the whole subject, with reference to one source of evil, which, all will admit, is productive of more *profanity*, *crime*, and *wretchedness*, and other injuries to society, than nearly all others, by which it is *corrupted* and *afflicted*. This *Monster* Cause of evil, consists in the manufacture and *public sale* of *intoxicating drinks*. In all countries, where this *scourge* of humanity has been in operation, it has produced the same fruits of iniquity, and social demoralization, and misery. It forms the chief impediment to the progress of religion, and, in every view, is most injurious





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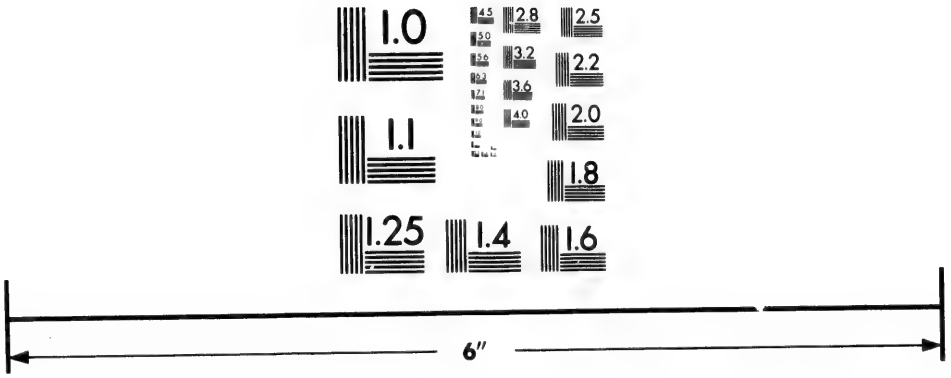

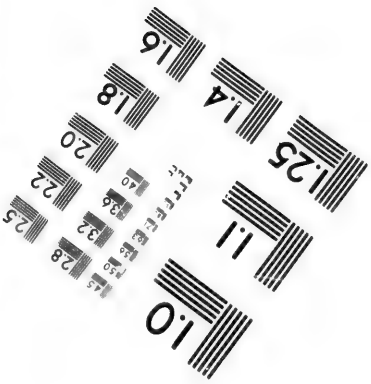

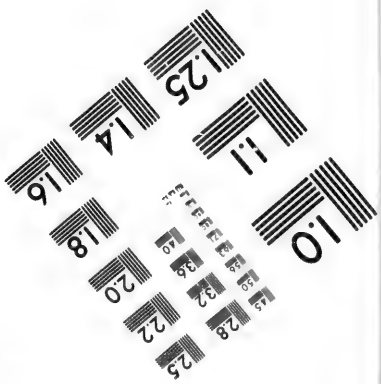

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to all the interests of that *primary* element, in the *moral* and *orderly* conduct, and the real *political prosperity*, and *happiness* of a people. From this strong drink system of evil, vast multitudes, in *professedly*, the most Christian countries, are withheld from the ministrations of religion; and, on the contrary, indulge in various modes of profanity and vice. Very large proportions, also, of children, and youth, through the drinking habits of their parents,—engendered and confirmed in the *public house*,—remain, not only destitute of *religious* instruction, but, also, of such *secular* knowledge, as would fit them for the proper and useful discharge of social duties. Being, thus, left to the unrestrained indulgence of their naturally depraved propensities, multitudes of them, speedily learn to drink, and swear, and practise various other modes of crime, and sink deeper, and deeper, in profanity, guilt, and hardihood. Thus, being *first* contaminated themselves, they, in turn, assist to ruin their youthful associates, and thereby, increase the social evils and afflictions. It is universally known, that in every Country, where the *public sale of strong drink* prevails, the great proportion of crimes, pauperism, profligacy, and profanity, and, indeed, nearly all other social injuries, have proceeded from that immoral and destructive source.

The religious state of a people, must, and will, exhibit, their true condition, as to crime and immorality, violence and disorder; and, to a great extent, as to poverty, ignorance, and unhappiness also, on the *one* hand; or, on the *other*, as to morality, peace, and general prosperity, the possession of really useful knowledge, and general contentment and happiness. If their religious principles and conduct, are *low*, or extremely *defective*, the vices and evils just mentioned, will unavoidably abound; while, *if* their religious state, is to a large extent, scripturally *sound*, and *pure*, both as to *principle* and *practice*, the virtues and blessings enumerated, with every other genuine advantage, will be the principal characteristics of their social condition.

It has ever been the common error, even of the most enlightened and prudent,—as they were generally esteemed,—among Rulers, and Statesmen, that they have failed to perceive, the important bearing and influence, which true religion has, upon social prosperity and happiness. Surely,

such persons, ought, by this time, to have made the discovery, of this wise and gracious arrangement, of a superintending and overruling Providence.

Viewing all these truths, as to the manifold *public injuries* from the traffic in intoxicating drinks, it is clearly apparent, that in accordance with the Scripture authority, as to Civil Rulers, with reference to *religion*, *morality*, and all the other interests of society, it is the duty of those entrusted with the power of making laws, to *prohibit*, that system of evil. But has *this* ever been done, except in a very few modern instances? On the contrary, that *hindrance* to religion, and *scourge* of society, has, for many generations, by legislative acts, and measures of the Ruling Powers; been *licensed* and *protected*; and, *all this*, in the countries, called the most *civilized* and *Christian*. Instead, of having been "a *terror* of evil works" they have legally authorized, the *invariably abounding cause* of those "*evil works*." Instead, of having been "Ministers of God" for *good*, they have been Ministers of a directly *opposite* description. Instead, of having been, as divinely required, "*revengers* to execute wrath" upon them that did *evil* they have *legally licensed* them, in carrying on their works of *profanity*, and of *social* immorality and affliction. Such legislators and rulers, though escaping the retribution of Society,—as might be expected,—cannot *annul* their responsibility to God; nor avoid His just *indignation* and *judgment* for such manifest oppositions to the purposes for which He ordained them. It is no valid objection to the employment of legal means, for suppressing that system of evil, to say, that it is impossible, in that mode, to effect its removal. Other agencies of injury to the religious and moral interests of society, such as,—*public gaming*, and *lotteries*, *profane* and *immoral* publications; and many others, have been legally prohibited; and if not, thereby, entirely prevented, they have been greatly limited. And, undoubtedly, it would be so as to the *intoxicating drinks*, if their manufacture and *public* sale were by law entirely prohibited. Moreover, that method for the suppression of the evil, would be such a compliance with divinely required duty, on the part of the Civil Powers, as would obtain for *them*, and their *country*, providential mercies, infinitely greater, and better, than the advantages of a *pecuniary* kind, now, *irreligiously* and *immor-*

ally, derived from the legal license of that profane and desolating scourge. As to any *seeming* public gain, it must be manifest to every truly enlightened mind, that it is a *blind* and *ruinous political policy*, to derive a *public revenue* from a source, producing so much irreligion and crime, debauchery, and misery; and so destructive of all the real interests of society.

There is another cause of demoralization, and of injury to religion and to society, greatly abounding in the present day, which must here be noticed, as a proper subject for the interference of the Civil Powers. It consists, in the vast variety of *contaminating* and some of them, even, *impious exhibitions*, by *idle*, *vagrant* and really *disreputable characters*. These persons, and their *legerdemain*, and *magical*, or other *profane* and *vicious* exhibitions, besides engendering and encouraging *idleness*, have a direct tendency to produce habits of *dissipation* and *immorality*, *insubordination* in the various relations of life; *dishonesty*, and innumerable other evils, corrupting to society, and otherwise injuring its interests. For the same reasons as to religious and moral duty, and the social welfare, which have been urged concerning the *strong drink evil*, all such corrupting scenes and performances, should be prohibited and suppressed by those who are declared, by the Divine Being, to be His "Ministers for good" to the people; and to be "a terror to evil works," and to restrain and punish those who commit them. Instead, however, of these duties being performed, these *evil workers* are directly encouraged and patronized; and their openly professed *wizard* and *magical* and other wicked and *corrupting performances*, are frequented by some if not many of those civil "Ministers of God," and Ruling Powers. To such palpable *derelictions* and *violations* of duty, in relation to religion, and morality, and the social welfare, these scriptural declarations most fitly and fully apply.—"Shall I not visit for all these things, saith the Lord;"—"To whom much is given, of him shall be much required;" and,—"That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

SERMON X.

ON CERTAIN

RELIGIOUS DUTIES,

OF A

RELATIVE NATURE.

1. Honesty and Uprightness, &c.—"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have." Levit. xix, 35, 36.——"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired, shall not abide with thee all night, until the morning." Levit. xix, 13.——"Ye shall not, therefore, oppress one another." Levit. xxv, 17.——"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow." Deut. xvi, 20.——"Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge." Deut. xxiv, 17.——"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." Ps. cxii, 4.——"A false balance is an abomination unto the Lord, but a just weight is his delight." Prov. xi, 1.——"To do justice and judgment, is more acceptable to the Lord, than sacrifice." Prov. xxi, 3.——"He that, by usury and unjust gain, increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him, that will pity the poor." Prov. xxviii, 8.——"Thus saith the Lord, keep ye judgment and do justice." Is. lvi, 1.——"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Math. vii, 12.——"Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Rom. xii, 17.——"Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Rom. xiii, 8.—13 v. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day."——"That

ye may walk honestly toward them that are without." 1 Thess. iv, 12.——"That ye may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. ii, 2.——"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles." 1 Pet. ii, 12.

In the dealings and intercourse of men with each other, there is no duty more obvious, and imperative, than *Honesty*. It is the plain suggestion of Conscience and Reason, even, independent of any special command, of a religious character. Among nations in any degree civilized, though destitute of a divine revelation, and involved in heathenism, and idolatry, it has, still, been generally recognized as a *righteous* principle, though so often violated in practice. All such nations, in their institutions and laws, however imperfect, or unjust, on many other points, have recognized this duty of *honesty*, in all dealings of trade, or barter, or other descriptions of business; and have prescribed measures for punishing its violation. The whole spirit and principles of revealed religion, under every dispensation, have so fully manifested this duty of *honesty*, and *uprightness*, in our dealings with each other, that, at first view, it might almost seem that special commands on the subject, were not at all requisite, especially for those who make more than an ordinary profession, of the faith and practice of our holy Christianity. But that infinitely *wise*, and *just Being*, who knows, thoroughly, the native *selfishness* and *covetousness* of the human heart, has seen it to be needful, to give to all of His professed people, and under each dispensation of His truth, many *special precepts*, for the strict observance of this primary and righteous duty. It is, indeed, one, not only of an *obvious*, but viewed throughout all its bearings and particulars, as exhibited in divine revelation, also of a most *extensive* description. Refraining from dispossessing another of any of his possessions, or property, by violence, or by what is called theft or robbery, in any form, is, comparatively, but a limited mode of the violation of that righteous principle of *honesty*. There are, almost, innumerable other modes, in which it is constantly violated, even among people called the most civilized and Christian. Some of them may here be briefly mentioned.

To begin with the manufacturers of goods, many of them,

will employ in the production of their articles, the *old* and nearly *worn out* materials of goods, of the same or even of other and inferior descriptions. In the varieties of food, and other things for table use, the *adulterations*, and in some instances, even *noxious mixtures*, are almost endless. On this subject, notwithstanding the legal enactments for prohibiting and punishing such fraud, and dishonesty, these practices still continue to a great extent. In the work of the tradesmen, there is often *bad* or *insufficient materials* used; and the work *slightly* and imperfectly done; and, then, means are employed, to give it a *fair* and *sound appearance*. In the production of liquors, of all varieties, similar dishonest practices prevail. It is well known, that in these articles, *noxious* and even *poisonous ingredients* are used, to a great extent, causing diseases, and death, in numerous instances. These consequences, cannot but be known to the persons, who use those destructive ingredients. In the sale of goods, there is often employed, *expressions* of high and unjust recommendation, as to *quality*, and *value*, commonly called, *puffing*. This will often deceive simple and unskilful persons, and induce them to purchase such inferior articles, at prices much above value. Now, what is all this, but actual *fraud* and *dishonesty? Subordinates*, serving in shops, learn to practice this species of *wickedness*, and, thus, it is extended and perpetuated. But, further, when certain articles are *rising*, or likely to rise, in *price*, through their *scarcity*, those who have the pecuniary means, or the requisite credit, will buy up large quantities of such articles, and when the actual and great *scarcity* occurs, the *selfish extortioners*, will bring their *hoards* into market, at *exorbitant prices*. This, goes under the mild and favorable name of *speculation*, or, perhaps, of *prudent enterprize;* but, in the balance of truth, it is one of the modes of unrighteousness, and real dishonesty. This is often done in articles of food; and, thus, actual *injustice* and *oppression* are committed towards the public, and especially towards the *poor*, and persons of limited means. Selling by *short* and *unjust weights* and *measures*, is, in some instances, still practised. This species of dishonesty, formerly prevailed to a great extent, but by legal regulations it has been greatly reduced.

Another mode of *dishonesty*, is that of persons,—knowing

their own insolvency, taking goods on *credit*, and *selling them off*, sometimes even at *reduced prices*; and paying the proceeds, ***not*** to the sellers of the goods, but to others, in order to prevent immediate *bankruptcy*, and preserve credit for a little longer time. Thus, they will continue to *trade*, and go on, in such a course of *dishonesty*, having, all the time, good reason to know, that *insolvency* is impending, and cannot be avoided, but must become ***public***. The conduct of *servants*, in wasting and destroying their masters' property, is so common, and so universally known, that it is only needful to mention it, as one of the particulars in the long and varied catalogue of dishonest acts. On the other hand, there is the equal, if not greater injustice and unrighteousness, of, *Masters* withholding from their *Servants*, or those in their employ, their wages or stipulated remuneration, at the periods when due; and, in some instances, failing altogether to pay for their services. Another mode of *dishonesty*, consists, in, purchasing articles on *credit*, without *possessing*, or having any reasonable means of *obtaining*, the means to pay for them; and *ultimately* failing to make such payment. This kind of dishonesty, in thus living at the expense of others, is of very frequent occurrence; and in not a few instances, leads to serious embarrassment, or ruin, in the affairs of the *sellers* of the goods. A similar species of dishonesty, consists in, the *debtor*, who has engaged to pay at a *certain time*, failing to do so, until a *distant period*, after many promises made, and violated, during the intervening time. This false and *dishonest* conduct, also, produces embarrassments, and, at times, the ruin of the pecuniary affairs of others. Many other modes of dishonesty might be mentioned, which are practised in the present day, in *trading*, *professional*, and other *employments*, and relations of civilized life; but the *enumeration*, or catalogue of them, is *too extensive*, to be given here. All such fraudulent and dishonest acts, are committed in Countries, favoured, in the highest degree, with the means of ***religious instruction*** and *improvement*, and of ***intellectual*** and ***moral enlightenment***. And, what is worse, many of such dishonest practices, are committed by persons, professedly united to Christian churches. But, some may say, surely no Christian will be guilty of any such unjust and immoral conduct. Undoubtedly, no *genuine Christian* will thus trans-

gress against *Conscience*, and the *divine Command*; but, from numerous proofs, it is deplorably evident, that there are numbers in *Christian Communion*, who are, in reality, but *external professors*, merely observing some of the *convenient outward forms of religion*, but are destitute of the life and power of godliness, and of true *Christian morality*. These, are the characters, who so transgress, and thus, in the views of some, bring a reproach upon religion itself, and help to lower its scriptural standard of *spirituality* of principle; and of holy and devoted *obedience*. Their mere profession, and observance of religious means, are no better than a solemn *mockery*, and increase their *guilt* in the sight of a holy and righteous God; who has declared, that, He "requireth truth in the inward parts;" and "hateth all the works of iniquity;" and that "*justice* and *judgment* are more acceptable to Him than sacrifice." To all such *dishonest* and *hypocritical* characters, these awful declarations of the Divine Word, most pointedly apply,—"Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbours service without wages, and giveth him not for his work:"—"The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" "Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." The heart of man is naturally so *deceitful*, and *selfish*, that the assistance of *grace*, and the utmost *circumspection*, even of the true Christian, are constantly needed to enable him, in all particulars of his intercourse with his fellow beings, to act with perfect integrity, and uprightness. On some occasions of such intercourse, and in some transactions of a *complicated* nature, it may, at first view, appear somewhat difficult, to discern the *true* line of *righteous conduct*; but by sincere and earnest prayer, with examination of the *oracles of truth*, the course of duty will be made sufficiently evident. In every such case, if all circumstances are truly and candidly examined, these inspired and most comprehensive directions will serve to remove the difficulty, and produce a righteous decision,—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;"—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise."

2. Relieving the Poor and Destitute.—"Thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field; neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest; and thou shalt not glean thy vineyard; neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; but thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger." Levit. xix, 9, 10.——"Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shalt not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing, the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works; and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto." Deut. xv, 7, 8, 10.——"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." Prov. xxv, 21, 22.——"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." Matt. v, 42.——"But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke xiv, 13.——"Distributing to the necessity of saints." Rom. xii, 13.

So great and deep is the native selfishness of the heart of man, that the compassionate God, under all the dispensations of His benevolent religion, has seen it to be needful, to give, even to His own professed people, many express directions, to the performance of the duty of relieving the temporal necessities of others. It is, indeed, the duty of our common *humanity* towards *itself*, but it is made more solemnly binding, by the divine commands. These require, that it be performed towards all persons needing our help, to whatever nation, or people, kindred, or class, they may belong; or, whatever may be their description, or character. But like every other duty, whether *natural*, *religious*, or *social*, it is very frequently overlooked and neglected, or but very imperfectly performed. Such neglect, or imperfection, may be attributed to a great variety of causes. Independent of religious principle and feeling, some appear naturally to be *more*, and others *less* sensible of the claims of the poor, and affected as to kind and spontaneous willingness to relieve them. Christian principle and precept, however, form the

safe and permanent rule of duty on the subject. This rule is founded in *love*, which, conjoined with *wisdom*, will be sufficient to guide aright free of *fluctuation* and *inconsistency*. Among merely worldly persons, intent on their own selfish pursuits for the acquisition of gain, there is scarcely any common duty of humanity, more frequently and unfeelingly neglected. Many of these, who are constantly increasing their *hoards*, and often *unrighteously* too, will grudge to yield any amount whatever, or merely a *pittance* for the relief of the hungry, or others of the needy and destitute. Yet many of such persons, make a profession of the Christian religion; and attend on its ministrations and ordinances. Such characters should think of these awful words of the righteous Judge,—"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he shall also cry himself, but shall not be heard;"—"I was hungry and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in, naked and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not; inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." He has declared that all such unfeeling and disobedient professors "shall go away into everlasting punishment."

But referring to those who seem to have some concern for the salvation of their souls; and are in the most intimate Church fellowship; many of such persons, are more or less deficient in this christan duty of ministering to the relief of the poor. It is but fair, and charitable to conclude, that this failure, is not so much to be attributed to a defect of kind inclination towards the needy, and suffering, as to the gratification of their own *vain* and improper desires, in the various modes of extravagant and sumptuous *decorations* and *display*; and of *conformities* to worldly and expensive *fashions* and *customs*. By reason of such *inconsistencies*, and *vanities*, they are, of course, except in some special instances, unable to contribute as *liberally* as they ought to do, for relieving the wants of their *brethren*, in the *church*, and of the poor and distressed in general. They seem, by their conduct, to forget the divine announcements,—"ye cannot serve God and mammon;"—If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? Being unfaithful in this most important duty, of relieving to

the required extent, the necessities of the Lord's people, and others, with the means He providentially placed in their hands, as His *Stewards*, they have no Scriptural reason to expect that He will adorn them, with the grace of His Holy Spirit, and thus *prepare* and *qualify* them, for the realms of glory and happiness. Let them, instantly, begin to act, in full and faithful accordance with the divine instruction.—"Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" In so acting, from the true christian principle, they will experience the truth and fulfilment of the gracious promises, which are added,—"then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer; thy light shall rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble."

3. Assisting Religious Means and Interests.—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." Prov. iii, 9.——"Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it: and I will be glorified saith the Lord." Hag. i, 4, 7, 8.——"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house: and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii, 8, 9, 10.——"It is required of Stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Cor. vi, 2.——"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing, if we shall reap your carnal things? Even so, hath the Lord, ordained that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel."

1 Cor. ix, 11, 14.——"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things." Gal. vi, 6.

It is certainly just and reasonable, that those who profess adherence to any religious system, should, if requisite, contribute means and exertions for its support and promotion. The chief difficulties on the subject, are, concerning the amount of such assistance in each case: and the modes or methods of affording it. If the hearts of all who profess our benevolent christianity, were as rightly affected regarding it, as they ought to be, no such difficulties, or of any other kind would exist. The impulse of *ardent* and *abiding love* would suggest and determine all the particulars and means involved in the subject; or which, from time to time, would arise concerning it. There would not *then*, as *now*, so frequently, be any *parleying* or *bargaining* between *Conscience* and *Selfishness*, as to the portion of pecuniary and other contributions, to be *surrendered* for religious purposes. There would be no occasion for any compulsory methods; nor yet for the *modern inventions* and *contrivances*, of *Bazaars*, to *allure* to the purchase of merely *ornamental trifles* at *extravagant* prices, for *frivolous decorations;* or the display of *vanity* and *folly;* or for *festive entertainments*, in order to draw forth the means required, for originating and promoting religious objects.

Under the *legal* dispensation, the Divine Legislator ordained, that each person should contribute a *tenth* of the fruits of his labours; which, together with portions of the sacred offerings of the people, were appointed for the support of the priesthood, and certain other religious purposes. But these were to be *voluntary* offerings; and no *compulsory* means were appointed to compel the fulfilment of the duty. The contributions for all such purposes should, in like manner, be of a *voluntary* description under our more *free* and *spiritual* dispensation. The infinitely wise and mighty God, who has all means and instruments at His command, could, without any direct human assistance, carry forward His own designs, for promoting His truth in the earth. But in *wisdom*, and *mercy*, He has *now* under our Christian dispensation, left to His professed people, under the teachings of His Spirit, the honourable privilege of devising and employing measures, towards effecting His gracious designs, of making known His

truth: and for the salvation of our race. Institutions and means, in aid of these purposes of mercy, have been greatly augmented during the present generation, but profanity and wickedness, in a great variety of forms, seem to have kept pace with the efforts for spiritual good, or have rather increased. A serious and continued deficiency of pecuniary support, to such religious institutions and efforts, is, unquestionably, one of the principal reasons, why they have not been carried out, to a much greater extent: and been more successful, in removing, or restraining the agencies for evil; and reclaiming a greater number of the profane and vicious. All these institutions, are constantly, and urgently soliciting such assistance. They are, undoubtedly, entitled to far more liberal support than they have yet obtained, being instrumental, in their various spheres of operation, in furthering the interests of the *Spiritual Kingdom*.

The public ministrations of the Ministers of the Sanctuary, form one of the chief instrumental means, for the diffusion and success of divine truth. It is most obvious, therefore, that if *spiritually* and otherwise, duly qualified, and zealous and faithful, they are justly entitled to be generously and comfortably supported. This, indeed, is positively enjoined, by the Scripture declarations, that,—"the labourer is worthy of his reward;" and that,—"the Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." In some denominations, this scriptural and reasonable duty, is, on the whole, fulfilled with tolerable fairness; but in others, in not a few instances, it is in truth quite otherwise. But, even, in cases where Ministers have been adequately supported, it has been chiefly and faithfully done, only by the smaller number of those under religious obligations to yield it. Some, or many, have *illiberally* and *irreligiously* neglected the manifest duty, though statedly hearing the religious instruction.

There are, also, Bible, and Missionary, and Tract Societies, Sunday School Institutions, Town and District Missions; with various other means for promoting religious objects, and extending and supporting the interests of divine truth. For some, or all of these, every Christian, and other person professing to desire the support and promotion of the principles of true religion, and of its moral precepts and influence, is.

according to plain Scripture, and reason, bound to assist, with a fair and due proportion of his *pecuniary means;* and also, in some mode, or other, by his *personal efforts*. But, it is truly deplorable, that vast numbers of such professors, fail in affording such assistance, to any, or an adequate and faithful extent. Viewing this particular of *equal* or *adequate offering*, in analogy or *comparison* with the offering of a *tenth* of the *products*, under the preceding dispensation, it may be asked, how many are there *now*, under our more *free* and *spiritual system*, who contribute in that proportion, or approach it, in any good degree? To look no lower, than a yearly income or revenue of £500, how many contribute £50 of it, for religious purposes? How *many*, or rather how *few* enjoying the £1000, annually, yield the £100; and so, proportionately, in the *higher* yearly sums? Most of such persons, cannot, indeed, *afford* to do it. The numerous *costly personal* and *family indulgences* and *vain displays*, will not admit of any such *religious offerings*, although the *poor souls' present* and *eternal interests*, will suffer through such neglects. And, what is the *radical*, and *primary* cause, that such is the state of the matter? The answer may readily, and truly be given;—It is, because they have not sought and obtained the heavenly *love* and *zeal*, which would have caused them to feel it, not merely a *duty*, but a pleasing *privilege*, to contribute their offerings and services, to promote the gracious and saving purposes of Him, who made such an agonizing offering to save them from *eternal ruin* and *misery*, and secure for them, *glory* and *happiness forever*. Such professors have never been brought to feel, that they "are not their own," but have been purchased for the service of Him who paid a price of such *humiliation* and *agony*, to effect their *redemption*, *safety* and *happiness*. They are not answering the purpose for which He thus suffered on their behalf, that "He might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify them unto Himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works." The only sufficient remedy, or means, for removing this evil, is, to have the *hearts* of such *cold* and *unfaithful professors*, and others, changed and renewed by grace, and the *love* of the Saviour and of souls, so firmly implanted there, as to expel that *love* of the *world* and its *vanities*, which now holds them in such *ruinous bondage*. Towards effecting such a happy deliver-

ance, the public ministrations of religion should be pointedly and faithfully applied, in accordance with the true Scriptural plan for obtaining it. When such a gracious change of character is largely accomplished, "Zion will," indeed, "appear in her beautiful garments;" and will "go forth conquering, and to conquer," on the right hand and the left; "her converts will be many;" "her gates will be open continually;" she "will become the joy of many generations;" and "the place of the Lord's feet, will indeed be glorious."

4. Doing Good to Others.—"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." Prov. iii, 27.——"Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight." Eccles. xi, 1, 2.——"Do good to them which hate you." "Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again." Luke vi, 27, 35.——"Thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." Levit. xix, 17.——"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Luke xvii, 3.——"Let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification." Rom. xv, 2.——"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." 1 Cor. x, 24.——"As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. vi, 10,——"Look not every man on his own things, but every man, also, on the things of others." Phil. ii, 4.——"Edify one another, even, as, also, ye do." "Warn them that are unruly; comfort the feeble minded; support the weak; be patient toward all men. See that none render evil, for evil, unto any man; but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men." 1 Thes. v, 11, 14, 15.——"Pure religion and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this,—To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction; and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i, 27.——"Use hospitality one to another, without grudging." 1 Pet. iv, 9.

The duty of doing good to others, enjoined in Scripture, is the *practical manifestation* of the *primary* divine command, concerning others,—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour, as thyself." The Saviour has given the true explanation of this

sublime precept, by informing us, through the narrative, concerning the *good Samaritan*, that we are to consider as our *Neighbour*, every individual of the human family, of whatever country, or class of character. We are, therefore, under the obligation of a *common humanity*, to succour him in all his distresses, and extremities; and to do him good in every form, according to the means in our power. The wise and merciful "God hath made of one blood, all nations of men;" and formed them in this *common humanity*, that they might, as to each other, feel and care for the *wants* and *anxieties*, the *pains*, and *afflictions*, to which all are liable, in this life of trial and change. But, how seldom is this merciful design and arrangement, fulfilled, in acts of kindness and beneficence by men towards, one another? Nations have, constantly, been "lifting up swords against nations," and spreading destruction and misery; and man towards his fellow man, even of the same country, and people, has been, either *oppressive*, and *cruel*, or *unjust* and *selfish*, and neglectful of his wants and welfare. But, the duty must, ever, remain unchangeable. The comprehensive command, is perfectly plain,—"Do good unto all men, especially to them, who are of the household of faith." There need not be the least difficulty, as to the various particulars, included in this *general*, and most *benevolent precept*. Let us refer to a few of them. And, first, as the precept directs, with relation to brethren in the christian faith. *These*, on every principle, are first entitled to experience from their brethren, most earnest cares and efforts for their *good*, in every mode in which it can be rendered. Are they in *sickness*, or *poverty*, the christian brother or sister, must, so *sympathize*, and also *relieve*, as circumstances require and permit. Do they require *advice*, and *instruction*, these methods of assistance must not be withheld, but be freely and fully afforded. Are they exposed to *temptation*, and *danger* of a *spiritual*, or any other description, faithful *warning advice* and *exhortation* must be promptly given. No plea, or feeling of inconvenience, must be allowed, to prevent the earliest performance of the duty. Do they *sin*, by *open transgression*, in any form, or by *neglect* of plainly incumbent duty, *admonition*, and *advice*, must, in *kindness* of manner, but *plainly* and with *firmness*, be offered, however disagreeable or trying the brotherly service may be. The divine commands,

on the point, are *unmistakably* plain:—"Thou shalt, in any wise, rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him;—"warn them that are unruly." It is recorded, in commendation of the early Roman Christians, that they were "able to admonish one another." Perhaps, there is scarcely any religious duty, which is so frequently neglected as this, of *faithful admonition*. In all such cases of neglect, *charity* and *zeal* for the good of souls, and for the interests of truth, are not as *ardent* and *active* as they ought to be, and, therefore, the duty is very frequently, and in some instances *fatally neglected*.

The commands to *do good* to others, are, in the most comprehensive terms. They apply to every being of the human family. Whatever may be his *country* or *language*, *habits*, or *class* or *character*, the *good* which his *spiritual* or *temporal* wants, or other circumstances require, the Christian must afford him, according to his ability and means. If *poor*, or *destitute*, relief must be promptly imparted. No plea, or excuse, but that of absolute inability, can be allowed to intervene to withhold it. The commands are plain, and absolute:—"Give alms of such things as ye have;"—Give, and it shall be given unto you." If he is in *sickness*, or *sorrow*, sympathy, and the needed assistance, must be kindly and freely afforded. If the *unconverted* and *sinful*, are in *danger*, or *perplexity*; and needing, and seeking *information* or *advice*, such assistance must be, truly, and kindly given, as in the case of the Christian brother. They must, also, plainly, and faithfully,—but in kindness of language and manner,—be *reproved* and *admonished* for *sin*, and be exhorted to *repentance*, and to turn from evil, and seek the divine forgiveness. The *appropriate* word of Scripture, must be brought to their attention, "if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." It is, indeed, impossible to specify, all the vast variety of modes in which we may, and ought, to do good to each other, as to *body* and *soul*, and all interests, relating to *time* and *eternity*. Let it, now, suffice to remark, briefly, that whatever is the mode, or description of benefit which it is in the power of the christian, to afford to his brother in the flesh, whoever he may be, he must readily and gladly impart to him, according to the gracious injunctions; "Look not every man on his own things,

but every man, also, on the things of others;"—"As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men." And let the divine declaration, be, also, ever remembered:—"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." If the Christian's heart is right with his God, and Saviour, and with his fellow men, he will,—under the light and guidance of the Spirit of wisdom and love,—be enabled, in every instance, to discern and fulfil the requisitions of this primary and ennobling duty, of universal Christian benevolence.

5. Candour and Charity, in Judging concerning Others.—"Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matt. vii, 1.——"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." John vii, 24.——"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" "Why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother, for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." Rom. xiv, 4, 10, 13.——"He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law." "There is one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy: Who art thou that judgest another?" James iv, 11, 12.

Hasty and uncharitable judgments, of the motives and conduct of others, form a part of the evil results of the pride of the *unrenewed* and naturally *cold* and *contracted* heart of man. At first view, it might seem rather strange, that while all are so fully inclined, and so ready to find, or invent, palliations and excuses for their own errors and faults, they are, generally, so prone to impute evil, and judge severely, concerning the motives and behaviour of others. Notwithstanding such native proneness for self vindication, and acquittal of blame, this propensity to judge *uncharitably* of others, may, if thoroughly analyzed, and examined,—be found to be chiefly traceable, to a consciousness of our own natural inclination to evil, generally, and in some, or many instances, of the same description of it, as we think we see, and therefore judge and condemn in others. Whatever may be the origin,

or producing cause, of such hasty and uncharitable judgments: they are, under every view of the subject, both presumptuous and unrighteous: and, always, more or less productive of injurious effects. They are always so, to the person who *forms* them, and often, also, to those against whom they are *formed*. They give immediate rise to prejudices, distrusts, and alienations; and often lead to strifes, and bitter contentions, and mutual injuries. Moreover, if the person who has formed any such rash and uncharitable judgment, discovers, as is frequently the case, that he has committed this fault, and should he be possessed of any measure of *just* and *generous* feeling, this will cause him more or less of painful *humiliation*, and *self-reproach*. Subordinate to all higher motives, *this* should serve as an additional preventive of any such illiberal and unrighteous conduct. But the great guilt of all such uncharitable judgments, consists, in their usurping the prerogatives, and being in direct opposition to the commands of the Almighty Sovereign and Judge of the Universe. He has said to all,—"Judge not;"—"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." But some may say, are we not to discriminate, and to judge or conclude, as to what is *virtuous* or *vicious*, *righteous* or *unrighteous*, in the conduct of others; and are we to look upon all actions in a moral view, with the same feelings and conclusions concerning them? Most certainly, such is not the meaning of the divine injunctions. On the contrary, we are as plainly commanded, not to "put darkness for light, nor light for darkness;" not to call "evil, *good*, and good, *evil*." An awful woe is pronounced, against all who act in any such *indiscriminate* and *impious* manner. The commands against judging each other, relate only to instances, where there is no sin, or offence, plainly manifest; but where any doubts appear, or can, in reason, or charity, be suggested, or discovered, to *justify* or *excuse* the conduct in question. This Scripture injunction, which is of universal application, will serve to induce a right conclusion, in all such seemingly doubtful cases,—"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." In all instances, where the least doubt exists, or may be found, on examination, and a knowledge of all circumstances, they must be allowed to prevail, and prevent a conclusion of *guilt*. And further, in every instance,

where personal duty does not require investigation, or enquiry, as to any such dubious conduct of others, any *enquiry*, or *intermeddling* concerning it, will be improper; and should, therefore, be avoided. Even where the sin, or fault, is clearly manifest, it must not be *trumpeted*, or *whispered* abroad, or in any form be made known to others, *except* in a way of plain duty, to prevent their being injured by the *guilty party*. Instead, of any such rash and uncharitable condemnation of others, even for real and manifest offences; and making them known, and discoursing concerning them, the Scripture direction should be promptly obeyed,—"Thou shalt, in any wise, rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him;"—"Go, and tell him his fault, between thee and him *alone*; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." In all cases of the *doubtful* or *questionable* conduct of others, there should be borne in mind; and be permitted to have full operation, that divine and comprehensive law, enjoining a *charity* which "doth not behave itself unseemly; thinketh no evil; beareth all things, and hopeth all things." If this grand rule of benevolent feeling and conduct were always consistently and faithfully observed, by professors of Christianity, there would be such a *diminution* as can scarcely be imagined, of the *prejudices*, *alienations* and *contentions* which now so greatly *disfigure*, and *injure* Society, in professedly Christian Countries, and prevent the *extension* and the beautiful and attractive *exhibition* of our sublime and benevolent religion. And what would be the greatest blessings of all, the universal practice of that charity, would obtain the Divine approbation and favour, and would again draw forth the remark made by the *unbelieving crowd*, in the primitive age,—"See how these Christians love one another;" and would lead to our Zion's converts being greatly increased; and to the extensive advancement of all her interests.

6. Good Example.—"I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." Ps. xxxix, 1.——"I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." Ps. ci, 2.—"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people." Ps. cxvi, 14.——"Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Math. v, 14, 16.——"I have given you an example,

that ye should do, as I have done unto you." John xiii, 15. ——"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, toward God, and toward men." Acts xxiv, 16.——"It is good, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine; nor any thing, whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Rom. xiv, 21.——"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them, which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample." Phil. iii, 17.——"Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time." Col. iv, 5.——"So that ye were ensamples to all that believe, in Macedonia, and Achaia." 1 Thes. i, 7.——"Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, to follow us." 2 Thes. iii, 9.——"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Tim. iv, 12.——"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." Tit. ii, 7.——"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." 1 Pet. ii, 12.—V. 21. "Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps."—— "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet. v, 3.

The influence of example, generally, but, more especially, in religious persons, whether for *good*, or *evil*, is always more or less extensive, often, indeed, altogether incalculable. In all the relations and affairs of life, it is far more influential, than most persons, by their conduct, seem to imagine. There can, scarcely, be any intercourse with others, of a merely indifferent character. Both the words, and deeds, and, at times, even the looks and gestures, will have their certain effects upon them, though the influence may not be immediately discerned, much less fully estimated. It is, indeed, scarcely possible to estimate, in all its degrees, and varieties, the influence of any individual, especially one, in an official, or other important position, as regards the duties and engagements even of a single day. Such a person, cannot move around among his fellow men, without exhibiting an example, and thereby diffusing an influence, for *good* or for *evil*, or occasionally for *both*, in some degree, though, perhaps, at the

time, imperceptible. His words, and his actions, will, invariably, have either a *transient*, or an *enduring* effect, upon others, injurious or otherwise. On certain occasions, they will have a bearing and influence, not merely on the *temporal* views and circumstances of some, but, even, on their *eternal* interests. But, how few there are, who think of this subject of *example*, commensurate with its solemn importance, and their own responsibility concerning it. How few, even among members of Christian churches, have principle, and courage, sufficient to lead them to censure and avoid, the *ungodly*, *unrighteous*, and *vain practices* of a *corrupt* and *deceitful* world; and, consistently, exhibit the opposite example. It is evident, that the more any individual is elevated in station, or employment, or the more he is distinguished, or estimated for *piety*, *talents*, or *knowledge*, the more is his *example* influential, and important. Hence Ministers of religion, and all other professors of Christianity, are, most especially, and extensively responsible, for the example they exhibit. Their whole conduct and demeanour, are closely observed and examined among themselves, and frequently, in favour of improper and hurtful imitation. They are viewed, with a watchful and scrutinizing eye, by mere worldly persons, and not only will *these*, consolingly avail themselves, of any conduct of the professedly religious, which seems to give them countenance in the practice of their *vanities*, and in their *sensual indulgences*, but, unhappily, some, or many among their brethren, are, by their example, inclined, and led, to act in like manner. All persons, indeed whatever may be their positions in the church, or employments in society, are as strictly accountable in a religious and moral view,—for their *example*, as they are for every other mode and means in their power, for influencing others. To all who profess christianity, the command is given,—"Let your light,"—that is,—your *example*, "so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." An awful woe is denounced, against those who shall cause others to offend. The minister of religion, most especially, is divinely required, to be "a *pattern* of good works;" and "an ensample to the flock." Both ministers and people, should ever follow the example of the devoted Paul, who declared;—"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a

conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." The christian should avoid, not only those open or palpable offences and follies, which may cause others to be seduced, or confirmed in any evil course, or practice; but he should, ever, be careful to avoid every particular in conduct, which is at all inconsistent with the *spirit* of the pure and beautiful system he professes to believe and obey. Such inconsistencies are, at times, almost as injurious to others, in regard to *example* as, even, occasional open violations of express divine commands. These inspired and comprehensive directions, should ever be borne in mind, and faithfully obeyed;—"See, then, that ye walk *circumspectly*, not as fools, but as wise;" "in *wisdom* toward them that are without;"—giving to none, "any cause of stumbling, or offence;" and that "none may have any evil thing to say of you," in reference to christian profession and example.

SERMON XI.

ON SANCTIFICATION.

1.—SCRIPTURAL MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION.

1. Love of God and Man.—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. vi, 5.——"Thou shalt love thy neighbour, as thyself." Levit. xix, 18.——"Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first, and great commandment. And the second is like unto it:—Thou shalt

love thy neighbour as thyself." Matt. xxii, 37, 38, 39.——"This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John xv, 12.——"And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Col. iii, 14.

2. Reverence and Fear of God.—"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Levit. x, 3.——"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God." Deut. vi, 13.——"God is greatly to be feared, in the assembly of the saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him." Ps. lxxxix, 7.——"Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. x, 28.——"Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence, and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii, 28.

3. Worship of God.—"Worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness." Ps. xxix, 2.——"Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Ps. l. 14.——"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His Courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name." Ps. c. 4.——"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him, in Spirit and in truth." John iv. 24.

4. Obedience to all the Revealed Will and Commands of God.—"Ye shall therefore keep all my Statutes, and all my judgments, and do them." Levit. xx, 22.——"Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in Heaven." Matt. vii, 21.——"He said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." Luke xi, 28.——"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv, 14.——"Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. ii, 13.——"To present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." Col. i. 22.——"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii, 14.

The word "*Sanctification*," employed as the Title of this Discourse, is of the same import and meaning as the term

Holiness so frequently found in Scripture. They will, therefore, be here *interchangeably* used, as having the one Scriptural meaning. Whatever cavils, or objections, may be offered, as to the doctrine of *Entire Sanctification*, there is no truth, or command, contained in divine revelation, given in more express and plain terms, than this, that the professed people of the Lord are to be *fully sanctified while in this life*. There are not merely a *few*, but *many* commands and exhortations, throughout the Scriptures, requiring and enjoining *holiness*, or Entire Sanctification, as essential to the full enjoyment of the favour of God, here, and as a fitness for admission into His heavenly Kingdom. The two following passages may be cited, as most direct and express on the point,—"Be ye holy, for I am holy;"—"Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father who is in Heaven is *perfect*." No words, more plain and forcible than these, can possibly, be used, to require *perfect holiness of heart and life*. Here, it will be well to examine, and explain, in what essential particulars, sanctification, or holiness, consists. It may first be remarked, that it is not *identical*, with spiritual or religious *knowledge*, even of the highest degree; nor of the largest measure of true religious *faith;* for as an inspired Apostle has said,—"Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity I am nothing." Neither does it consist, in possessing supernatural or miraculous gifts and powers, of the most exalted degrees; for the same Apostle has said,—"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Neither, does Sanctification imply, an exemption from *mistakes* and *errors*, in opinion, or judgment, in matters even of a *moral* character; especially in relation to others, where a knowledge of all the circumstances concerning such matters, is not possessed, and cannot be obtained, so that a true judgment upon them can be formed. In all particulars, indeed, of plain and commanded duty, the Christian has the promise of being taught of the Lord; and, if *prayerful*, *watchful*, and in other respects *faithful*, he will experience its fulfilment, through every stage of his spiritual journey. He does not mistake, as to any matters essential to salvation. He does

not call evil, *good*, or good, *evil*; or knowingly transgress in any manner. But, he is still a *fallible* being, and liable to many weaknesses, and infirmities; such as, *slowness*, and *imperfection* of *understanding*, or *imagination* or other faculties; *inaccuracies* in language; *ungracefulness*, though not *rudeness*, in behaviour; with many other defects, or infirmities; but none of these, are *sins* or in any contrariety, or inconsistency, with either inward or outward holiness.

On a view of the whole of scriptural truth, on the subject, it seems sufficiently plain, that entire Sanctification, may, and, indeed, must be resolved, into the principle, or feeling, of *love*. A supreme and *perfect love of God*, implanted in the soul, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, and cherished and maintained there, through the same divine influence; and a *loving* and *faithful obedience*, form the source, or principle, from whence proceeds the entire Sanctification, which our holy Christianity demands, of all its professors. This perfect love of God, produces, as one of its chief and invariable fruits, the love of every one of the human family; but, more especially, of all those, who are His spiritual and faithful people. Such a love of God and Man, enables the Christian to attain to a state of deliverance from that native corrupt *will*; and those evil *desires*, and *affections*, and *inordinate appetites*, which set Man at enmity with God, and, also, so often with his fellow-man. And, further, this *love* is the spring and supporting cause of an entire consecration of all the powers and affections of the Christian, to the revealed will and service of his God, and Saviour; and of the most enlarged and benevolent desires, and endeavours, for the real good, and the happiness, of all of the human family, as far as he can, possibly, be instrumental in promoting their welfare. Such consecration, and obedience to the will and service of God, and desires, and endeavours, for the good of Men, are not the fruits of any of the *native* dispositions, or powers of Man. Unregenerate nature cannot originate them. They can, only, be originated and sustained, by a *supernatural* influence; that, of the Holy Spirit. Scripture declares, that, "if a man would give all the substance of his house for *love*, it would be utterly contemned;" and, that,—"though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it

profiteth me nothing." This Charity, or *love*, which is the source, or moving spring of such entire consecration, and holiness of *heart* and *life*, is brought into the soul, and maintained there, by the divine power of *faith*, and its obedient exercise by the Christian. To this *faith*, the Holy Spirit of *love* is given, and continued, according as it is written,—"that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, through faith." This faith,—through the influence of the Divine Spirit, thus imparted,—gives rise to the *love* of God, from a *spiritual* perception of the revealed truth, that He loved us, and sent His Son, to be the propitiation for our sins; and to a love of the Son, the Saviour, from a like view of the similar truth, that He, also, "loved us, and gave Himself for us." Such love to our God and Saviour, so originated, and maintained in the soul, gives rise, as already observed, to the love of men, as the creatures of God, whose salvation He wills, and designs, and for all of whom, the Saviour died to make atonement, and to redeem from sin and Satan, and eternally save. It is this love of God and Man, which produces and maintains, all virtuous, holy, and benevolent desires, dispositions, and affections; and an entire and devoted obedience to all the will and commands of God; and all works of mercy and goodness towards men. This state of *pious* and *holy consecration;* of *obedience* to God, and *benevolence*, and *active goodness* towards men, may be said to compose and constitute the Christian *holiness* and *perfection*, which the Scriptures so plainly, and imperatively require. Such love, originates and stimulates *zeal*, and increasingly active efforts, to promote the glory of God, by furthering, in every possible mode, the interests of His Kingdom in the earth. And such obedience, and efforts for good, are not performed by the sanctified Christian, from a mere sense of *duty*, but are *joyfully* rendered, as the fruits of that love, and entire consecration, which he feels, and ever cherishes, for Him who has so graciously provided for his present and eternal salvation and happiness.

A learned and pious English Divine, of a former age, has written, as follows, regarding inward Purity,—"The *pure* in heart, are such as regulate, not only the *external* conduct of their lives, but, also, the *inward* frame and *habit* of their minds; and conform, not only their *actions*, but their *wills*,

and *desires* their *thoughts*, and *designs*, to the rule of the Law; and to the dictates of the *internal* light of God, in their soul; such as *sanctify* the Lord God in their hearts; compose the inmost recesses of their minds, into an holy *awe* and *reverence* of the Divine Presence: set a law to all their intellectual powers; and suffer not the least thought or passion, to violate the order, either of *Reason* or *Grace;* such, lastly, as yield no consent, either to the *being*, or *stay* of irregular motions; as delight themselves, with no pleasing recollections, no imaginary scenes of their past immoralities; but set themselves at the greatest distance from sin, resist the very first beginnings, and as near as they can, abstain from the least "appearance of evil."

The following sentiments, of another pious Divine, may, here, appropriately be given, as descriptive of the character of a sanctified Christian:—"His one *desire*, is the one *design* of his life, namely, 'To do, not his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.' His *one intention*, at all times and in all places, is, not to please himself, but Him, whom his soul loveth. He hath a 'single eye,' and because his 'eye is single, his whole body is full of light.' God reigns alone: all that is in the soul, is *Holiness* to the Lord. Every thought that arises, points to Him, and is in obedience to the law of Christ. And 'the tree is known by its fruits.' For as he loves God, so he keeps His commandments; not only *some*, or *most* of them, but *all*, from the *least* to the *greatest*. He has 'a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.' Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God has enjoined, he does. He runs the way of God's commandments. It is his glory and joy, so to do. It is his daily crown of rejoicing, to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. He continually presents his soul, and body, a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, entirely and without reserve: devoting himself, all he *has*, and all he *is*, to His glory. All the talents he has, he constantly employs, according to his Master's will; every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body. By consequence, 'whatsoever he doth, it is all to the glory of God.' In all his employments, of every kind, he not only aims at *this*, but actually attains it. Nor do the customs of the World, at all hinder his 'running the race which is set before him.' He

cannot therefore lay up treasures on earth, no more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot speak evil of his neighbour, any more than he can either *lie*, for God or Man. He cannot utter an unkind word, of any one, for *love* keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak idle words: no corrupt conversation ever comes out of his mouth. But 'whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are just, or of good report,' he thinks, speaks, and acts, 'adorning the gospel of God our Saviour in all things.'"

The love of God, begets and keeps alive, a holy filial fear of offending Him, in any manner. With this love, is also conjoined, a deep and constant reverence of the Divine Being, which is manifested in all approaches unto Him;—in His worship, in reading, and hearing His Word, attending on His Ordinances; and in all devotional and religious exercises, and employments. In none of these, will he practise or suffer, any *lightness* or *unbecoming freedom*, in *word* or *behaviour*; as is the case, with some, even in *prayer* and other acts of *Worship*, as well as in a *light* or *too free* and *frequent* use of the *Sacred Name*, in religious conversation, and on other occasions. He bears in mind, and acts in accordance with the inspired direction; "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire." He, also, unites with such *love* and *reverence* a constant and firm *trust* and *confidence*, in the *mercy* and *goodness* of God, through Christ, for protection from all enemies; for support under every trial, affliction, and difficulty; and for preservation, from all evil; and a confidence, that the God and Saviour whom he loves, will make "all things work together for his good." He will delight in the worship of God; and in reading, and hearing His Word, and meditating thereon; adopting as his own, the words of the Psalmist,—"O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day. Thy testimonies have I taken, as an heritage, for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." It is given to him, to "taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the World to come." He relies on the gracious promises, without wavering; and expects and receives their fulfilment, in his daily and delightful experience. His feet run with alacrity and joy, in all the paths of a devoted obedi-

ence to the will and commands of his God; doing all, with a single eye, to please Him, and forward His cause of *truth* and *mercy* in the earth.

Towards his fellow-men, in all his intercourse with them, and in all things concerning them, he cherishes and manifests that charity, which is "kind and envieth not; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; hopeth all things, endureth all things;" ever desiring, and labouring, for the good of all men, in every mode, both as to temporal and spiritual interests; more especially, for the good of "those, who are of the household of faith." Such a charity, or love, is expressly called in Scripture, the "bond of perfectness." In the performance of all his duties to his God, and to men, the *sanctified Christian*, is prompted and guided by the influence of the spirit of *love;* and the unerring light and precepts of the Sacred Word.

But there are persons,—and of piety too,—who object to this doctrine of Christian perfection; and say, that it is not attainable in this mortal state, and declare to the effect, that the *holiest men*, *must*, and *will*, continue to commit sins, of some descriptions, occasionally, during life. When pressed in argument, with plain scriptural passages, declaring the doctrine of *Christian perfection*, they will, with an air of confidence, ask their *opponent*, if he ever knew one, who was possessed of such *perfection;* and will urge *this*, as a sufficient answer to the doctrine. Now, to those who will look at the subject, even briefly, without prejudice, but with a candid desire to ascertain the truth, in the light of Scripture, it must be evident, that this is no answer whatever. The question is not, whether any individual ever met with such a perfect character, but whether, there is scriptural authority and proof, to show, with sufficient precision and clearness, that such a character is attainable, by any human being, while in this world. Whether there *have been*, or *may be*, many, or few of them, is of no importance whatever, as to the *truth* or *falsity* of the doctrine. On these points, scriptural truth, alone, must decide. We do know this much, however, as to individual instances of such entire Sanctification, that there were persons, under both the *former*, and the *present* dispensation, in whose *biographies*, as given in Scripture, we do *not find* any sin, or fault, recorded against them.

Among these, may be mentioned,—Joseph, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Ezra, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, under the *preceding* dispensation. Of Daniel, it was repeatedly declared to him, by the Angel, that he was a man, "greatly beloved," evidently meaning, beloved of God. We may be sure, he would not have been so greatly beloved of God, if he was committing sin of any kind. Under our present dispensation, we have, in the inspired records to a large extent, the life and conduct of the Apostle Paul, after his conversion; also, several particulars of the conduct of Apollos,—of the beloved disciple John, and of Philip; also of Timothy and Titus, both greatly beloved of Paul. Against none of these, does any sin appear, but all that is recorded concerning their Christian life and conduct, show them to have been *perfectly sanctified*, and holy persons. As to these instances, it will not do to answer, by saying, that they were highly *inspired* persons. Their holiness of character, did not arise, merely, from their inspired and miraculous gifts; or depend on these gifts, for continuance in a state of holiness. The covetous Balaam, was endowed with direct inspiration, and under it, uttered most sublime prophecies; but he was soon after slain in battle, while aiding the enemies of the Lord. Solomon, highly inspired, and the wisest of men, fell into the most abominable idolatries, and other forms of wickedness; and there are good reasons to believe, perished in his sins. Even under this Christian dispensation, some similar characters have appeared. It seems, from Scripture, that the atrocious traitor Judas, was at one time, endowed like the other Apostles, with the power of working benevolent miracles; for it is recorded, that when the Saviour "had called unto him his *twelve* disciples,"—their names being given, *including Judas*,—"he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. These *twelve* Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give." The wicked Caiphas, also, uttered an inspired prophecy, just when concurring in the condemnation of the immaculate Redeemer.

In elucidation and support of the doctrine of Entire Sanctification, it may, further, be remarked, that more gracious

and extensive means are afforded for attaining that state, under our Christian, and more *Spiritual System*, than under the one preceding it. Under our dispensation, the Divine Spirit has been given, in far more *rich* and *powerful* effusions, for producing such holiness, than during any previous periods. Scripture testimonies are clear and abundant on this point. Promises of such greater measures of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, were given from time to time, as we find recorded, in many parts of the Old Testament Scriptures. Concerning the times of our dispensation, it is said in the book of Isaiah; "This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." And, also, in Ezekiel xxxvi Ch.; "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart, also, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness. Thus saith the Lord, in the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, the heathen shall know, that I the Lord, build the ruined places. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it." In many passages of the New Testament Scriptures, we find similar promises, of the *perfectly sanctifying* influences of the Holy Spirit; and *exhortations*, and *commands*, to *seek the blessing*, not only as *possible* of attainment, but as *absolutely requisite*. It is said of the Saviour, that "He shall save His people *from* their sins,"—meaning, doubtless, *all* their sins, for there is no intimation, as to *many* or *few* of them. And the words mean, and include, a salvation, not merely from the *guilt*, but from the *power* and the *commission* of sin. In the first Epistle of John, are these most conclusive passages, in proof of the doctrine,—"Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen Him, neither known Him;"—"He that committeth sin, is of the devil:"—"Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin." "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure:"—"Herein is our love made perfect,

that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because *as* He is, so are we in this world:"—"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." And, again,—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins: and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." A learned Divine in remarking on these two last passages has thus written;—"Now, it is evident, the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance, wrought *in this world:* For he saith not, *the blood of Christ will cleanse* (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment,) but it *cleanseth*, (at the time present) *us* (living Christians) *from all sin.* And it is equally evident, that if *any sin* remain, we are not cleansed from *all sin:* if *any* unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from *all* unrighteousness. Neither, let any sinner against his own soul, say, that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, because this is confounding together, what the Apostle clearly distinguishes; who mentions first,—'*to forgive us our sins;*' and these, 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

Moreover, is it not clear, that if God, by His Spirit, can save from the commission of *some* sins, He can, also, save from *all* sins; and if the Christian can be thus saved, from sins of an *external* description, why not, through the same *power*, from those of an *inward* nature? If he can be saved,—as all true Christians are,—from *swearing*, *lying*, *slandering*, *dishonesty*, *gross impurities*, and *licentiousness*, *lusts* of the *flesh*, of the *eye*, and the *pride of life;* and other *outward* sins, and immoralities, there is no reason whatever, why he cannot, through the influence of the same Almighty, and gracious Spirit, be *purified*, and *saved*, from *pride*, *hatred*, *malice*, *envy*, *uncharitableness;* and the *wilful permission* and *entertainment* of *evil desires*, *intentions*, and *purposes*, *thoughts* and *imaginations*, and other *inward* emotions of a *sinful* character. The same Divine and benevolent Power, *can*, and *will*, in the *faithful* believer accomplish, not merely a *part*, but the *whole* work of perfect holiness, according to the exhortation and command, for "perfecting holiness, in the fear of God."

If the caviller at this doctrine of *perfection*, will still press his question, as to individual instances of its truth, since the Apostolic Age, he may, safely, be answered, that there have been *very many* such characters, through all ages, since, and

down to the present time, on whom *envy*, or *malice*, could fasten *no stain of sin*; and who through lengthened periods, and to the close of life, maintained a perfectly blameless, and *holy* course of conduct; in accordance with the scriptural declarations;—"A *good* tree cannot bring forth *evil fruit*, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth *good fruit*; wherefore, by their fruits, ye shall know them." To refer, only, to, comparatively, modern times, who will venture to say,—and produce *proof* to support the assertion,—that Hooper, and Leighton, Bunyan, and Baxter, Fletcher of Madeley, Wesley, and Wilberforce; with many others, who might be named, both in the English Church Establishment; and in other Churches, in different Countries, were not men of that sanctified character? We must believe, that only "the pure in heart, shall see God;" and that without *perfect holiness*, none can see Him, or enter His Kingdom; for the Scriptures declare these solemn truths. A blessing is declared, for those "who hunger and thirst after righteousness;" and it is promised, that "they shall be filled" There can be no greater or higher state, than being filled with *righteousness*, or *holiness*. And this must be accomplished, while *here*, for the promise evidently relates to this life; no such Work being promised to be wrought, after death. All true protestant Christians, *believe* and *know*, from Scripture, that *after death*, there is no *place*, or *state* of *purgatory*; in which there will be effected, any such perfect deliverance from sin, and its fatal consequences. On the contrary, Scriptnre declares, that, "if the tree fall toward the *South*, or toward the *North*, in the place where the tree falleth, *there* it shall be;" that there is no change of character, after the grave has received the dead; "no work nor device," *then*; he, *then*, "that is *filthy*," will be "*filthy* still;" and "he that is *holy*," will be "*holy* still." It may, therefore, be asked,—*when*, and *where*, is the *perfect holiness*, essentially requisite, for admission into the eternal kingdom of *love* and *purity*, to be attained? *Death* cannot effect it, for this is no *Saviour* from the guilt of sin. If, therefore, *death* cannot give this requisite holiness; and there is no *purgatorial*, or intermediate state to effect it, it follows, as a necessary consequence,—even if there were no Scripture on the point,—that it must take place *during this probationary state*. The whole tenor of Scripture,

indeed, shows most clearly, that such is the truth concerning the doctrine. The contrary belief, is always of a dangerous tendency, and in innumerable instances, has led to eternally ruinous results. It often engenders, a *moral deadness*, or *unconcern*, regarding the commission of sin, and produces, and maintains, a careless, *Antinomian* practice. Even, many sincere and partially pious, and righteous souls, through holding this erroneous doctrine, are kept continually crying,—"O my leanness, my leanness." And no wonder, that such is their cry. With many of them, it will still be their *cry*, and their *portion*; and if they are saved at last, it will be, because through grace and mercy, their *lives* have been *more holy* than their *creed*; and in the words of Job, they will be saved, as it were, "by the skin of their teeth."

This section of the subject, may, here, be closed, with the sentiments of a pious and learned writer, in remarking on the text in Matthew Ch. 5.—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven, is perfect." He says—"God calls Himself *Love*, to teach us, that in *this* consists that perfection, the attainment of which He has made both our *duty* and *privilege!* for these words of our Lord, include both a *command* and a *promise*. As in His infinite nature, there is no sin, nothing but goodness and love, so in your finite nature, there shall dwell *no sin*, for 'the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, shall make you free from the law of *sin* and *death*,' Rom. viii, 2. God shall live in, fill, and rule your hearts; and in what He *fills* and *influences*, neither Satan, nor sin can have any part. If men, slighting their own mercies, cry out,—This is impossible!—whom does this arguing reprove?—God, who, on this ground, has given a command, the fulfilment of which is *impossible*. However inveterate the disease of sin may be, the grace of the Lord Jesus can *fully cure it*; and who will say, that He who laid down his life for our souls, will not use his *power*, completely to effect that salvation which He has died to procure. But *where* is the person, thus saved? Wherever *he* is found, who loves God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength, and his neighbour as himself; and for the honour of *Christianity*, and its *Author*, may we not hope, there are many such in the Church of God; not known, indeed, by any profession of this kind, which they make, but by a surer testimony;—that of uniformly *holy tempers, piety to God* and *beneficence to Man*."

2.—GOD REQUIRES, AND COMMANDS, THE PERFECT SANCTIFICATION OF HIS PEOPLE.

"I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Gen. xvii, 1.——"Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy." Levit. xi, 44.——"Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God." Deut. xviii, 13.——"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect." Matt. v. 48. ——"Be perfect." 2 Cor. xiii, 11.——"According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." Eph. i, 4.——"And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Col. iii, 14.—— "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. v, 23, 24.——"But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, in all manner of conversation. 1 Pet. i, 15.

The attributes and perfections of the holy and glorious God, as revealed in the Scriptures, sufficiently show, that He *cannot*, and *should not* receive from us, His rational creatures, *less* than the *entire consecration*, and full and *perfect employment*, of the *whole* of the powers and qualities, with which He has endowed us; and of all the means with which He has favoured us, for the fulfilment of His will and service. He is perfectly holy, just, and good; and all the blessings which we enjoy, we derive from His mercy and goodness. "In Him," indeed, "we live, and move, and have our being." His revealed will, concerning us, declares, repeatedly, and in the most express and pointed terms, that He requires from us, such *entire consecration* and a *perfect obedience* to all His commands. That sacred revelation informs us, that "whatsoever we do," *all* is to be done, "to the glory of God;" and again, that whatsoever we do, in *word* or *deed*, we are to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him;" and we are exhorted, by a consideration of "the mercies of God," to present our "bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God;" and are informed,—as we cannot but acknowledge,—that it is our

"reasonable service." And these words of the Saviour, are still more comprehensive,—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This, of course, relates only to *moral qualities*; and to the extent of the capabilities and means with which He has endowed and favoured us. To that full extent, it is, indeed, the reasonable duty of every rational and intelligent being, to be consecrated and devoted to the service of his God, and gracious Benefactor. Every instance of disobedience, as to such duty and service, is a sin against the Divine Sovereign and Lawgiver, and is, therefore, an infringement on His rule; and rebellion against His Authority, and righteous law. And if that rule and law, were not so full and binding as they are, but tolerated and permitted, with *perfect impunity*, any *one* act of disobedience, why might they not, in like manner, permit *any number* of offences, and thus, the gracious plan and sacrifice for our redemption, and salvation, would be shown to have been needless. Moreover, such rebellion, *with impunity*, would afford a license to sin, and the most dangerous and pernicious example, to other orders of intelligent beings. It is, therefore, essentially requisite, that even under our gospel dispensation, its precepts should demand perfect obedience, and entire sanctification, *while here*, to prepare, and qualify us, for the spiritual worship and service of our God and Saviour, *in this life*, and for admission into His eternal kingdom of *holiness* and *happiness*.

Man, was at first formed, in the moral image of his holy Creator, and the divine plan for his Salvation, purports, and proposes, his redemption from all sin and iniquity; and his restoration to the same perfect spiritual and moral image, in which he was formed. Therefore, the will and commands of God, under every dispensation of His religion, are,—that we shall be holy. He declares, in His Gospel, that His "will is our Sanctification;"—Commands us to "be perfect,"—to "perfect holiness in his fear;" and to "put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." No expressions, demanding such *entire sanctification*, and holiness, could possibly be stronger, or more imperative. In the prayer, our Lord has given us, we entreat our Father in Heaven, that His will may "be done on earth, as it is in Heaven." He, who is infinitely wise, knows what is best and most appropriate, for the mani-

testation of His own glory, and for our happiness. Holiness is essentially requisite to happiness, and as He wills our happiness, *here* and *hereafter*, He commands us to be holy; and He has richly provided, and bestows the grace, and means whereby we may attain the *one*, and to secure the *other*. Sin *ever has been*, and *ever will be*, the cause of all unhappiness and misery; and in no other way can *happiness* be attained, but by the possession of *holiness*. The wise and merciful God has given no commands, impossible to be fulfilled; but for every command to man, His *fallen* and *weak*, but *rational* creature, He is ever willing, and ready, to bestow all the grace and power needful, to qualify and enable him, to fulfil the duty required. A contrary supposition, would indeed, be an impeachment of the Divine wisdom and sincerity. He says, in His Word;—my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness;"—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings, as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." With the inspired prayer, that "the very God of peace," would "wholly Sanctify" the Thessalonian believers, and that their "whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless;" there is given, the encouraging promise, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." The same gracious promise, is ever *available*, and will be *fulfilled* in the experience of every *faithful* and *obedient* believer to the end of time.

3.—SCRIPTURAL REASONS FOR SANCTIFICATION.

"This is it, that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me." Levit. x, 3.——"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Ps. xxix, 2.——"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy steps." Prov. iii, 6.——"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." Ps. xxxi, 24.——"Now the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Rom. xv, 13.——"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Is. xlviii, 18.——"Live in peace, and the God of love, and peace, shall be with you." 2 Cor. xiii, 11.——"Because he

hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him, and honour him; With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." Ps. xci, 1, 14, 15, 16.——"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matt. v, 8.——"Follow peace with all men, and holiness: without which none shall see the Lord." Heb. xii, 14.——"Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality,—eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Rom. ii, 6, 7, 8, 9.——"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the World." Matt. xxv, 34.

Among the numerous *essential* requisites for the Sanctification of the Christian, the *first* which may be mentioned, arise from the Holy Character of God; and his express commands, that all His people shall be *holy*. He has never given a command, of any kind, to man, which He did not design to be fulfilled; or which, through the assistance of His promised and imparted grace, was impossible to be performed. For every duty He requires, of His people, and in every event, the following promise applies, and, if they are *faithful*, will be amply fulfilled to them, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and each will be able, rejoicingly, to say, with the holy and devoted Paul,—"I can do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me." As already observed, God wills and designs, the *present* and *eternal* happiness of men. And He knows, that they cannot be *happy*, even here, or be duly qualified for His spiritual Worship and Service; or pass through the trials and vicissitudes of life, with *stedfastness* and *comfort* of mind, unless they become *sanctified*, and *holy*, in *heart* and *life*. He has made, in His gospel plan of salvation, the most ample provision for the full accomplishment of His design and commands, for the *holiness* of His people. He, so loved our race, that He gave His beloved Son, to atone "for the sins of the world:" and that Son so loved us,

that He freely offered, and gave Himself for us, and through the Eternal Spirit, made a full and perfect atonement, for all by his own precious sufferings and death, and has, thereby, procured, the influences of the Holy Spirit, to turn us, "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." This gracious and Almighty Spirit, gives the power to exercise faith, in the precious blood of the Redeemer, which, as Scripture declares, "cleanseth from all sin;" and *thus*, these words of the Saviour are fulfilled, "sanctified through faith that is in me." The Christian needs this sanctification, to enable him *confidingly to retain*, and with constant *composure*, and *comfort*, to *exercise*, all the graces which the Holy Spirit imparts. Of these graces, so important is that of *Hope* that the scripture says, "we are saved by hope." Sanctification, therefore, is requisite, that this grace may be preserved, in well founded and comfortable exercise. And, further, it is only the sanctified spirit, that has obtained the full victory over the power and influence of those evil propensities, lusts, and passions, which belong to native humanity, and secured entire deliverance from their painful strivings to obtain indulgence. The very genius and design of the Christian religion, is, to destroy *corruption*, to teach us to crucify our evil affections, and inordinate desires, and to "sanctify us in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God;" for, "this is the will of God," says the Apostle, "even your sanctification." Know ye not, says the scripture, that your bodies are the members of Christ; Know ye not, that they are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and which ye have of God? "Ye are not your own, but are bought with a price," therefore, "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Our bodies are not our own, to *use*, or *abuse*, at pleasure, because, our Saviour has purchased them to Himself, by his sufferings and death, for their redemption. And they are, also, the Temples of the Holy Spirit, to dwell in them, to direct and influence our minds, and, therefore, should not be employed, in any thing unworthy His presence, or repugnant to His purity. Such a sanctification, is requisite, in order to the constant enjoyment of that "peace of God which passeth all understanding," which the gracious Lord wills his people always to enjoy; and which, as Scripture declares, is the result of their minds being constantly stayed on Him.

The Sanctification of the *Affections*, is also essential, to qualify and enable the believer, to exercise a steadfast and joyous faith in the love,—the protecting care,—the guidance,—and all the other mercies which his God and Saviour has promised to His faithful and obedient people. *These*, as declared, "dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty." *These*, He *hears*, when they call *in trouble*, and *delivers* them. Such faith, however, cannot be exercised, if any sin is indulged in, or allowed. Scripture declares that "the *just* shall live by faith."

But, further, such entire Sanctification of *heart* and *spirit*, is requisite, in order that all devotional exercises, may be both *delightful* and *comforting*, in the greatest degree; and that *obedience*, in all the service of God, may be performed, with *lively zeal*, *alacrity*, and *delight*. It is requisite, also, for contending, with full success, against every assault and temptation, of the great spiritual adversary of souls, who will, from time to time, assault the sanctified ones, as he did, the mighty and holy "*Captain of Salvation*," even to the last. And, further, it is needful, to stimulate and quicken the believer, to *devise*, and zealously and actively *labour*, in love, for the good of his fellow beings, as to body and soul, and all their interests, both as to *time* and *eternity*, according to the Scripture direction, to "do good unto all men, especially unto them, who are of the household of faith;" without "being weary in well doing," but "always abounding in the work of the Lord." It is needful, also, for enabling the Christian to bear *patiently*, and *meekly* without resentment, or any unforgiving or retaliating spirit, or conduct, the revilings, slanders, and otherwise unjust and injurious treatment of wicked and unrighteous men; forgiving enemies, and not being "overcome of evil," but overcoming "evil with good;" preserving "a conscience void of offence, toward God, and toward men." Holiness of heart, is requisite, also, in order to keeping all the natural appetites and powers, of a lawful description, under strict and due subordination to the *spiritual nature;* and to enlightened and sanctified *reason*, and *prudence;* thus following the example of the holy Apostle, who said,—"I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that, by any means, after I have preached to

others, I myself, should be a castaway." And it is farther essential, for maintaining patience, and humble resignation, under bereavements, afflictive dispensations, and trials, which Christians, as well as others, experience in this probationary, and transitory state. Under all such afflictions, and trials, let the Christian remember, that his Saviour has told him, that it is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of Heaven;" and let him be consoled with the divine assurances, that the Lord "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; but for their profit," and that "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." It is by such chastisements, and other trials, that the Lord promotes the sanctification of his faithful people, and prepares them for His glorious and eternal Kingdom. The entire sanctification of the Christian, is, also, essentially requisite, for admission into that Kingdom; and to the presence of Him, who is the *perfection of Holiness;* and who has declared, that only the "pure in heart" and the holy, shall see His face. And, lastly, such sanctification is absolutely requisite, in order to qualify for the companionship of the holy Angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect;" and for the holy exercises and enjoyments of the *glorious* and *everlasting* inheritance.

On the essential qualifications for admission into that Kingdom of glory, and for its exalted and most blissful employments, a pious Divine, has, thus, descriptively, and beautifully written;—"Till the *image* of Holiness, which has been *defaced* by Sin, be *renewed* in our minds, we are utterly incapable of the enjoyment of the *first*, and chief *good*, in which all our felicity does consist: for "*what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, or what communion hath light with darkness?* Our holy religion, therefore, in order to prepare us, for the happiness of the next life, is designed to mortify our lusts and passions, and to call off our minds from *inferior* things; and raise them to higher and *spiritual* objects, that we may be disposed for the happiness of another world; and taught to relish the delights of it: Whereas, should we be able to taste no pleasure in any thing but what is *sensual* and *earthly*, we must needs be extremely *miserable*, when we come into the other world: because we should meet with nothing to entertain ourselves withal; no employ-

ment suitable to our disposition, no pleasure that would agree with our depraved appetites, and vicious inclinations. For what concord could there be, between sensual and *carnalized* souls, that understand no other pleasures but only those of the *flesh*, and those pure and *virgin spirits*, which never eat, nor drink, but live for ever, upon Wisdom, and Holiness, and Love, and Contemplation? How can I be happy, in seeing that God whom I cannot love; in conversing with those spirits whose *genius* I abhor; and in being forever employed in those *heavenly* exercises, to which I have the greatest aversion? No, no, till I am of the same *opinion* with the *celestial* Inhabitants, and have my mind contempered to the heavenly state, it is impossible that Heaven and I, should ever agree; and I may as well *see* without *Eyes*, or *hear* without *Ears*, as pretend to enjoy Heaven, without an heavenly Disposition: So, that, by the nature of things, as well as by the Laws of God, it is ordained, that no unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and that without *Holiness* none shall see God."

4.—MEANS FOR OBTAINING SANCTIFICATION.

1. Influence of the Holy Spirit.—"When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth." John xvi, 13.——"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." "The Spirit, itself, maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. viii, 4, 13, 26.——"We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii, 18.——"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Gal. v, 16.——"Because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii, 13.——"Seeing ye have purified your souls, in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, see, that ye love one another, with a pure heart, fervently." 1 Pet. i. 22.

2. Prayer.—"In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." Ps.

xxxviii, 3.——"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. xxvi, 41.——"Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke xi, 9.——"Continuing instant in prayer." Rom. xii, 12.——"Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. v, 17.

3.—Faith, Hope, and Trust, &c.—"Jesus answering saith unto them,—Have faith in God,"——"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Matt. xi, 22, 24.——"We are saved by Hope." Rom. viii, 24.——"For an helmet, the hope of salvation." 1 Thess. v, 8,——"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." Heb, vi, 19.——"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Is. xxvi, 3.——"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me, ye can do nothing." John xv, 5.

4. The Holy Scriptures.—"And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart." Deut. vi, 6.——"Wherewithal, shall a young man, cleanse his way?—by taking heed thereto, according to thy Word." Ps. cxix, 9.——"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John xvii, 7.——"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom." Col. iii, 16.

5. Meditation.—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein, day and night." Josh. i, 8.——"In His law doth he meditate, day and night; and he shall be like a tree, planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Ps. i, 2, 3.——"Commune with thine own heart upon your bed, and be still." Ps. iv, 4.——"Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them." 1 Tim. iv, 15.

6. Obedience.—"Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear Him, and keep His Commandments; and obey His voice; and ye shall serve him and cleave unto him." Deut. xiii, 4.——"To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God." Ps. l, 23.——"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father

which is in Heaven." Matt. vii, 21.——"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free." John viii, 31, 32.——"The doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. ii, 13.

7. PERSEVERANCE.—"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matt. xxiv, 13.——"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." Luke ix, 62.——"Abide in me, and I in you." John xv, 4.——"Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." 1 Cor. xv, 58.——"Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will, and to do, of His good pleasure." Phil. ii, 12, 13.——"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. v, 21.——"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering; for He is faithful that promised." Heb. x, 23.——"To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii, 7, 10.——"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment." Rev. iii, 5.—V. 12. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out."——"He that overcometh, shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son." Rev. xxi, 7.

From the first awakening of the sinner to a sense of his *guilt* and *danger*, through the whole course of *spiritual regeneration*, and *renewal*, unto the *entire sanctification* of the Christian believer, the operations and influence of the Holy Spirit, are essentially requisite. He is the Sacred Being, who, as the Saviour has said, "reproves the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." Scripture declares, that "no man hath quickened his own soul;" neither can he, by his own *unaided efforts*, preserve the spiritual life, which is divinely imparted. The Almighty and gracious Spirit is said to quicken those, who are "dead in trespasses and sins." He creates *alarms* for the soul's safety,—*prompts*, *influences*, and *guides prayer*,—spiritually and clearly shows the revealed plan of salvation,—exhibits the divine willingness to forgive,—the merits and all sufficiency of the Saviour's atonement,—

his readiness to receive the penitent; and enables him to believe on that Saviour, "with the heart unto righteousness," and thus receive pardon, healing, and peace. Through the power of this benevolent Spirit, the Christian believer is enabled to mortify, and gain the victory, over all his native sinful appetites, propensities, and passions; and to preserve the spiritual life in his soul; for it is written,—"If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," evidently meaning, that, thereby, the new and spiritual life, shall be sustained. As the *opposites* of all such native evil qualities, and affections, the Holy Spirit imparts, and sustains, His own gracious fruits, which are declared to be,—"love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such, there is no law." He not only softens the *heart*, and bends the *will*, to a compliance with the Divine precepts, but by His secret operations, is, continually, exciting such desires, and affections in the Christian, as both exalt and purify his renewed nature. He excites love to God, and to all that is truly worthy of that noble passion; and begets *aversion* to every thing that is contrary to the *purity* of the Divine Character. He enlarges the heart of the believer, with joy and gladness, while serving his God and Saviour. He raises and preserves in him, a tender fear of offending the Divine Majesty, but makes him *fearless* and *undaunted* in the discharge of duty; and in suffering for righteousness sake. He kindles a holy indignation against sin, especially if it be of an heinous nature; but at the same time inspires an even and calm temper, which enables the Christian to "live peaceably with all men." The operations of the gracious Spirit, also, inspires him with such *joys* and *refreshments* as are requisite to support and comfort him, under such temptations, and difficulties, as, at times, would, otherwise, overwhelm him. For, this is the promise which the Saviour has given,—"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. According to this, the Apostle made his earnest prayer to God, for the Roman Christians, that He "would fill them with all joy and peace in believing," that they might "abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." This is the Spirit of *Consolation*, which made the first Christians rejoice in tribulations, and afflictions; and enabled them to undergo

the most exquisite torments, with *patience* and *magnanimity*. He made the whole Army of Martyrs, engage so valiantly, and come off with *Conquest* and *Renown*.

But, further, when the great Adversary of Souls, presents his most *alluring* or *ensnaring* temptations; or makes his fiercest assaults; and "cometh in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord, lifts up a standard against him," in the believer's Soul; and brings him off, "more than conqueror, through Him that loved him." He enlightens the mind to see more, and more, of the evil nature, and hateful, and dangerous character of Sin; and exhibits the beauty and excellency of *holiness*; causing the regenerated Soul to "hunger and thirst after righteousness:"—after the fulness of the great salvation. He reveals the *spiritual loveliness*, and *beauty* of the Saviour, according to His gracious promises,—"He shall testify of me;—"He shall show you things to come;" He shall glorify me, for He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The Spirit, who is also called the "*Comforter*," applies His own written word, from time to time, as it is *adapted*, and *needful*, in the christian's *experience*, giving him to understand and *taste* of that word, for his spiritual *nourishment*, *direction*, and *comfort*; and as a *foretaste* of the joys to be revealed, and fulfilled, in the Heavenly World; thus affording him, support and consolation in every time of trial and need. He helps the infirmities of the believer, in *prayer*, and other spiritual exercises; makes *intercession* for him, as promised, enlarges his *faith*, increases his *love*, and makes him to "abound in *hope*."

But although the influences of the Holy Spirit, are essentially and continually requisite, towards the *Santification* of the Christian, yet, since he is required to cleanse himself "from all filthiness, both of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" there is some part of the sanctifying work to be performed by *him*. He cannot, indeed, give the *first* motions to his mind for effecting it; but when he perceives they *are given*, he has the means in his power, for its furtherance. He can *cherish* the sacred influences imparted; and avoid all *acts*, and *occasions*, which may tend to impair them, or cause them to be withdrawn. He *can*, and is *required*, to be, watchful, against all temptations and allurements to sin; and must so resist them, as to overcome. He must abstain from all *corrupting* and dangerous *associations*

and *companionships*: and avoid, in all things, even "the appearance of evil." He *can* and *must* be constant and earnest in prayer, for spiritual *strength*, *wisdom*, and *guidance*. The Lord requires, that we should earnestly and importunately ask of Him, the spiritual blessings we require. It is declared, that "an idle soul shall suffer hunger, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." All the promises of spiritual mercies are *suspended* on our asking, and seeking, with sincerity and perseverance. The Lord has declared,—"I will, yet, be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them;" and for encouragement, the Saviour has said, "ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find;" "if ye, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more, shall your Heavenly Father, give good things to them that ask Him." We are commanded to "pray always and not to faint;" and to pray "with all supplication in the spirit," and also in faith, *expecting* and *believing* that we shall receive the blessings we require, according to the gracious promises of the faithful word. The blessings sought, may possibly, not be immediately bestowed, in the precise *way*, or *manner* desired; but, if the petitions for grace, have been *sincere*, and in *faith*, they will be answered and fulfilled, for the christian's *greatest good*.

With *perseverance* in sincere and earnest *prayer*, there must be constantly exercised unwavering *faith*, *trust* and *hope*, in the *love* and *faithfulness* of God; and a steadfast reliance on the *atoning sacrifice*, and *merits*, of the divine and loving Redeemer. These graces, originated in the soul, by the Holy Spirit, and cherished and exercised by the earnest believer, form the *foundation*, and afford the *spring*, to all holy *desires*, *affections* and *motives*, and produce a *sanctified* and *devoted* obedience to all the divine commands. We are plainly informed, that "without faith, it is impossible to please God;" and that, "the just shall live by faith;" and are exhorted, to "trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" and a blessing is pronounced for those, who so trust in Him. The exercise of a genuine *Hope* in the Lord, is also so essential for *support*, *comfort* and *encouragement*, and for *sanctification*, that it is, even, said "we are saved by hope." There is the prayer of an Apostle, that believers "may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" and there is a blessing declared "for the man, whose hope

the Lord is." It has been often and truly remarked that nothing can be accomplished without *hope*. In every human pursuit, and enterprize, the *hope* of some *success* is cherished, or else the object of effort would be abandoned. All the ancient saints, and worthies, in all their *conflicts*, *temptations* and *perplexities*, cherished the *hope* of mercy, and deliverance; or of some result which would be for their *spiritual benefit*. When the pious and penitent David, was in deep spiritual distress, he exclaimed,—"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me, hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." He declared, "in His word do I hope," and prayed,—"let me not be disappointed of my hope." In the promises of the Sacred and *infallible* word, must the Christian rest, and depend on the faithfulness of that *merciful* and *unchangeable* God, who has so richly provided, "that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." He has declared, that, He "will be the hope of His people." But it is only to *sincere* and *faithful* souls that such promises are *made*, and *apply*, for while it said, that "the hope of the righteous shall be gladness," it is declared, that,—"the hope of the hypocrite shall perish." The Lord is, indeed, the only *hope* of His faithful people, who, relying on the many precious promises, and from a remembrance of past mercies and deliverances,—can even "rejoice in tribulation, knowing, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope." As directed, and promised, they must "wait for the hope of righteousness;" and of *entire sanctification* "by faith." *Hope* is called, in Scripture "the helmet of Salvation." As a helmet, in bodily armour, is *that* which defends against blows and injuries to the head.—one of the most *vital* parts of the body, so, *Hope* in all *spiritual conflicts*, is the *helmet* of defence, against the assaults of Satan, on the *faith* and *confidence* of the Christian. It is also said to be "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast; and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is, for us, entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever." The Lord has declared, that He "taketh pleasure in them that hope in His mercy;" and that we are "made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life." Like as to every other grace, the *imparted power* for its assisting exercise, must be cherished, and

diligently employed; ever relying on the encouraging assurance, that,—"it is good, that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Such *faith* and *hope* must be reposed *solely* and *patiently* on the gracious promises given through Christ, together with a persevering obedience to all the divine requirements. And though the desired and expected blessing, may seem to *tarry*, let the believer, still confidently wait for it; for it will surely come, at the *time*, and in the *measure*, which Divine Wisdom and Benevolence see, will be for the *greatest good*.

With the exercise of faith and hope, and the other graces of the Divine Spirit, there must be conjoined, by the Christian, what is especially his own act and exercise; a frequent, and deeply attentive *meditation*, on the attributes and character of God, as He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures;—"Glorious in holiness;"—a lover of *righteousness*, an hater of *iniquity*, and who cannot connive at sin. There must, also, be the like meditation, on the Sacred Word, in all its particulars of *precept*, *warning*, *instruction*, *promise* and *direction;* and as to every path, and point of duty. The Christian must, also, closely examine and meditate, as to the general, or *habitual* current of his *inclinations*, and *desires*, *affections*, and *motives;* and the tenor of his conduct, in all the relations and circumstances of life in which he is placed; marking all defects, and deviations from the line of duty, and promptly confessing them, and seeking forgiveness at the throne of mercy; and praying for grace, to assist in future endeavours to be more faithful. In the means and efforts he employs, towards his *sanctification*, the divine exhortations and commands, regarding an obedient fulfilment of duty, must ever be borne in mind; and be diligently and faithfully carried out, in the daily conduct.

All the *instructions*, *precepts* and *promises*, and every other part of Sacred Revelation, are designed by its infinitely wise and beneficent Author, to be instrumental in restoring man to the favour of his Maker, by assisting to sanctify him, in all his powers and affections, so as thus, to regain the holy and happy image he at first possessed. In this way, *alone*, as graciously designed, can he become qualified for the spiritual and joyous worship and service of his God, w[illegible]here below, and for admission hereafter, at that "right hand, where are pleasures for evermore."

In order to obtain that *entire Sanctification*, which will secure these mercies and blessings, there must be, to the close of life, an undeviating *perseverance*, in a course of *self-denial*, of every mode of *forbidden* and *sinful indulgence*; the *mortification* and *conquest* of every *evil desire*, *passion*, and *principle*; the avoidance of all *corrupt* associations, scenes, and pursuits; and a devoted and active *obedience*, in faith and love, to all the divine requirements; and the diligent performance of every *personal* and *relative* duty. Scripture declares, that it is *only* he, who thus *endures* to the *end*, that shall be finally saved. *Only* those, who have washed their *robes*, and made them *white*, through faith, in the blood of the gospel Covenant, will gain admission to the Church of the redeemed, in the Heavenly Kingdom. The Saviour has given the impressively *warning* words,—"Abide in me; if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;" and by His inspired Apostles, He has further said,—"hold fast that which is good;"—"Give all diligence, to make your calling and election sure." To those, *only*, who are "faithful unto death" has He promised "the Crown of life." When the professed disciple is sanctified throughout, his robes "made *white*," and "without any spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," as scripturally required, *then only* is he "meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light;" qualified to enter the gates into the heavenly City;—associate with Angels, and "the Spirits of the just made perfect;" sit down at "the Marriage Supper of the Lamb" partake of the fruit of "the tree of life;" Worship God in His Holy Temple; and be admitted to the Beatific Vision,—the fulness of bliss.

Since, therefore, Entire Sanctification secures the fulfilment of the promises, both as to this life, and that which is to come, in here concluding this Discourse, the Christian reader cannot be better exhorted, than in the inspired language, contained in the Epistle to the Philippian believers,—"Finally, brethern, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." "And the God of Peace shall be with you."

SERMON XII.

ON THE

TEMPORAL RETRIBUTIONS OF GOD; FOR SIN;

AND HIS AGENTS AND MEANS FOR EFFECTING THEM.

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1. The Divine Government of the World.—"I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come; and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee." Exod. xxiii, 27.——"The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich." 1 Sam. ii, 7.——"So the Lord smote the Ethiopians, before Asa, and before Judah," 2 Chron. xiv, 12.——"So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his God gave him rest, round about." 2 Chron. xx, 30.——"Also in Judah, the hand of God was to give them one heart, to do the commandment of the King, and of the Princes, by the word of the Lord." 2 Chron. xxx, 12.——"Thus, the Lord saved Hezekiah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, from the hand of Sennacherib the King of Assyria; and from the hand of all other; and guided them on every side." 2 Chron. xxxii, 22,——"The kingdom is the Lord's; and He is the Gover or among the Nations." Ps. xxii, 28.——"The Lord bringeth the Counsel of the heathen to nought, He maketh the devices of the people of none effect." Ps. xxxiii, 10.——"He maketh wars to cease, unto the end of the earth." Ps. xlvi, 9.——"God is the King of all the earth." Ps, xlvii, 7.——"God is the Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. lxxv, 7,——"The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof, is of the Lord." Prov. xvi, 33.——"Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a

man, then, understand his own way?" Prov. xx, 24.——"The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water, He turneth it, withersoever He will." Prov. xxi, 1.—V. 31. "The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord."——"Behold the Lord maketh the Earth empty, and maketh it waste; and turneth it upside down; and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." Is. xxiv, 1.——"And I will deliver thee, and this city, out of the hand of the King of Assyria; and I will defend this city." Is. xxxviii, 6.

There is scarcely any *doctrine* or *tenet* concerning which,—even among professors of the true religion,—there is more *ignorance*, and *unbelief*, than on the plainly revealed, and sublime *truth*, of the overruling *Providence*, and *Government* of God, in the affairs and events of this world, relating both to individuals, and nations. Not only, as to *ordinary* occurrences, but concerniug those of *extraordinary* magnitude, such as,—*famines*, and *pestilences*, *desolating tempests*, and other forms of destruction and calamity;—the *subversion* of dynasties,—the afflicting *convulsions*, and *distresses*, and the *subjugation* of nations, the Divine Authority, and Government, are not recognized, as having sent them, as chastisements for the sins of those afflicted by them; but some *natural*, or other *secondary* causes, are assigned, as having occasioned them. Whether such conclusions, as to these and other similar events, are to be attributed to native pride, or blindness;—to a secret general infidelity,—or to any other erroneous principle, or sentiment,—may give rise to a variety of conjectures, or opinions;—but the *fact* of such ignoring of Divine operations, and arrangements, in such cases, is unquestionable. On the mention, or suggestion, that any very signal or extraordinary event, has proceeded from a Divine overruling Providence, there occurs, very generally, either a denial of any such Power, in causing them; or such a *silence* observed, as sufficiently manifests, sceptical doubts or distrusts, concerning its operation and influence. The enlightened Christian, knows, that there are no such things as *Chance* or *Fortune*. The world is governed by God *alone*; who disposes of all events; and though many things *happen*, which did not appear in their immediate causes, yet they did as much depend upon the Will and Power of the *First Cause* of all, as the rising and setting of

ne *Sun*; or the flowing of the *Sea*. None of them ever happen, independent of the *purpose* and *intention* of God, who foresees them, before they come to pass; and directs them to His wise *ends* and *purposes*. What can be more *uncertain* than an arrow shot at a *venture!* and, yet, *that* with which Ahab was slain, was directed by the unerring hand of God. If we consider of what vast importance those events, which we call *fortuitous*, are, in the government of the world; how the lives and fortunes of men; the fate of Kingdoms, and Nations; the successes and reverses of war: and the changes of Governments,—are many times determined, and effected, by them; how the wisest counsels are defeated; and the strongest Powers overcome; and the wicked remarkably punished; surely, we cannot but think, that these things are the Province of God, and the more immediate objects of His providential care and attention, since they are such powerful *instruments* in His hands. Those, therefore, who would go about to exclude *Him*, from the disposal of these events, and the other affairs of this world, as being too *trivial* and below His Concern, endeavour to rob Him, of a large division of His Dominion and Government.

A pious writer, of a former Age, has expressed the following wise and excellent sentiments, regarding the Providential Government of God:—"One Branch of the Providence of God, is,—His ordering and directing all the events that attend human affairs, such as long Life and sudden Death, Health, and Sickness, Honour, and Disgrace, Riches, and Poverty, Famine, and Plenty, War, and Peace; and those many great, and surprising changes, and Revolutions, which many times happen, in Kingdoms and States. In the greatest, and most public Transactions of the World, when they go on, in such a manner, as to look like the effects of human foresight, and contrivance, we are apt to stop short, in our reflections upon them, without carrying our thoughts up to that *invisible* Hand, which wields the vast *Machine*, and directs all its Springs and Motions. But, when the great Scene of Government is shifted, all at once, and the causes that visibly contribute to the production of this effect, bear no proportion to it; then, we look out for others of a more extended force; we perceive a Divine Providence, interesting itself in human affairs; and adore the *Footsteps* of it. Since,

therefore, we are so apt to forget God's Administration of the great Affairs below, when they go on *even* and *regularly*, He is pleased, by awakening *Notices*, now and then, to put us in mind of it; to present to our view, some astonishing *Revolution of State*, like a glaring *Comet*, hung up in the air, whose extraordinary appearance, and irregular motion, shall sooner lead our thoughts up to the Author of Nature, and imprint a deeper awe of Him upon our minds, than the sight of the whole Host of Heaven, in orderly array, continually moving around us. The truth is, were it not for such turns and Revolutions of State, as not only arouse, and awaken the attentic of the negligent; but make the heads of the ablest, and most experienced *lookers-on*, giddy at the sight, God would,—in the opinion of many of His creatures,—be shut out from the Government of the World; and the honour of His Conduct, devolved upon some of the mean and subordinate Instruments of it, those *poor Insects*, (as an ingenious Author expresses it,) *that sit upon the wheels of State, and imagine themselves, to be the Authors of all its Motions, and able to check, or to quicken them, at their pleasure;* and, therefore, in vindication of His Providence, and in manifestation of His Government over the World, God is pleased, sometimes to give such men, a convincing proof of their folly, by unravelling all their Measures, at once, and bringing about a *new* scene of things, which they could not *foresee*, with all their *skill*, nor *prevent* with all their *prudence;* that so, 'the wise man' may learn, 'not to glory in his *Wisdom;*' and 'the mighty man, not to glory in his *Might;* but, he that glorieth, may glory in this,—that he understandeth, and knoweth *me;* that I am the Lord, which exercise Loving-kindness, and Judgment, and Righteousness, in the Earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.' These are some of the Acts and Offices, wherein the Providence of God consists; and whereby He makes Himself known to be 'the Most High, that Ruleth in the Kingdoms of Men.'"

To the pious and enlightened student of Divine Revelation, it is as manifest, as any other Sacred Truth therein recorded, that the Lord does, indeed, Rule *among* and *over* the children of men. He so believes, because the infallible and unchangeable Word declares, that the God and Ruler of the Heavens, also governs the nations upon earth; that "His Kingdom

ruleth over all;"—that "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder;" that,—"shall there be evil, (*or affliction*) in a city, and the Lord hath not done it;"—that, "His judgments are in all the Earth;"—that, "He maketh poor, and maketh rich;" and, that, "He pulleth down one, and setteth up another." It is a ground of confidence, and a source of *comfort*, to the Christian, that God does so overrule, and govern, as to all the events of this life, for he feels assured, that if afflictions befal him, they are divinely intended for his spiritual and real benefit; and that, in himself, there is *need* for such dispensations. He will say with the chastened and penitent Psalmist,—"It is good for me, that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes;" "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right; and that thou, in faithfulness, hast afflicted me." In the time of temptation, persecution, and trial, he will be able to adopt, for his support and encouragement, the language of the same tried and persecuted servant of the Lord,—"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help;" "The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear;" "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me; Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me."

2 Temporal Retributions, for Sins of the Godly.—"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore, ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Numb, xx, 12.——"As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." Deut. viii, 5.——"In that day I will perform against Eli, all things which I have spoken, concerning his house, when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him, that I will judge his house, for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." 1 Sam. iii, 12, 13.——"If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men; and with the stripes of the children of men." 2 Sam. vii, 14.——"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, &c. wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite, with the sword, and hast taken *his* wife to be *thy* wife; and hast slain him with the sword of the

children of Ammon. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house. I will raise up evil against thee, out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour." 2 Sam, xii, 7, 9, 10, 11.——"Nevertheless, Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him; and hearkened not unto the words of Necho, from the mouth of God; and came to fight. And the Archers shot at King Josiah, and the King said to his servants, Have me away, for I am sore wounded." 2 Chron. xxxv, 22, 23.—V. 24. "And he died."——"I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou, in faithfulness, hast afflicted me." Ps. cxix, 75.——"I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy *dross*, and take away all thy *tin*." Is. i, 25. ——"Wherefore, doth a living man complain, a man, for the punishment of his sins. We have transgressed, and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger." Lam. iii, 39, 42, 43.——"I will hedge up thy way with thorns; and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." Hos. ii, 6.——"I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me." Micah. vi. [illegible]——"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent." Rev. iii, 19.

Although the final *Judgments* and *Awards*, for the deeds done in the body, are reserved for the future and eternal World; and, in some degree, similar afflictive events befal the *godly*, and the *wicked*, in this probationary State; yet there is, to a large extent, a Divine *temporal* Retribution for the sins of each of those opposite characters. God is a Being, who is infinitely *Just*, as well as *Merciful*, and *Gracious*, and, therefore, He cannot look on any violation of His holy Authority and Law, but with high displeasure; and *must*, and *will*, in consistency with His holy Character, not only, hereafter, execute punishment, for every unrepented sin, but also, in many instances, does inflict chastisements, for those which have been confessed and forgiven. Such inflictions, on penitent and pardoned offenders, seem to be, in part, of a punitive description, and to be designed, also, as a warning, and preventive, against future transgressions. To some extent, such chastisements, likewise, serve as a warning *exam-*

ple, and *restraint* to others, against the commission of sin. In this respect, as in so many others, "whatsoever things were written aforetime," concerning the sins and errors, of both the *pious*, and the *ungodly* were written for the admonition of others, throughout all ages. Man, is, naturally, not only a *depraved* but a *reckless* Being; and requires every kind of discipline, and treatment, to prevent him from immediately ruining himself; and to teach him, the line of conduct, which will conserve, and promote, his best interests, both as to *time* and *eternity*. It is only the spiritually enlightened, "the *prudent* man," who, according to the inspired Proverb,—"foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself;" while "the *simple*," or the *foolish* and *reckless* "pass on, and are punished." All this is true, not only as to spiritual things, but, also, as to mere worldly designs and affairs. In many instances of these, which are constantly occurring, one, or a few, inconsiderate and hasty acts, involve, and draw after them, a succession of afflictive consequences, which can neither be avoided, or entirely overcome, but terminate in deep and continued embarrassment, and distress, or final ruin. But, such secular evils, are, in general, only light, as to importance and injury, compared with the afflicting consequences of a *spiritual* description, which the Christian ever brings upon himself, by acts of disobedience and sin. *These*, affect the most vital and the permanent interests, and therefore, for a variety of reasons, they must, to one who knows the truths of religion, and has experienced its consolations and other blessings, occasion sorrows and regrets, of a severe, and often of an enduring description. They, also, bring down such divine chastisements, as are most distressing, and grievous to be borne; and, in some instances, such as will make even life itself, a *burthen*, rather than a *blessing*. To one who has experienced the light of the Divine countenance, and, a joyous sense of the favour of Him, whose loving-kindness is better than life, what, indeed, can be a greater affliction and misery, than, through *sin* to lose those precious blessings, and enjoyments, though but for a season? Instead of cheering *light*, and *joy*, and *peace*, he will, now, feel the *shadows* and *cloud* of the Divine displeasure resting upon him, and be compelled to go mourning from day to day, groping in darkness, and deep disquietude; the wells of salvation yielding him no refreshing enjoyment, while constantly

crying,—"O that I knew where I might find Him;" and like the penitent Psalmist, entreating,—"Cast me not away from thy presence; take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." "The hypocrites in heart," do, indeed, "heap up wrath, for they cry not, when He bindeth them;" but those who have experienced the blissful sense of forgiveness; have been admitted to the exalted privilege of joyous communion with their God, and Saviour, in the means of grace; receiving freely of the water of life, for their souls' refreshment and comfort;—for *these* to be deprived of all these blessings, is, indeed, the heaviest of all afflictions. They "*feel* the rod," and *know* "who hath appointed it." They cry, when He thus "bindeth them;" but for their due chastisement, He often waits to show Himself gracious; and suffers them to bear for a protracted season, the afflicting consequences of their folly; and makes them to feel, and know, that "thorns and snares are in the way of the froward;" and that "the way of transgressors is hard." He makes them, in a measure, to "eat of the fruit of their own way;" and by such disciplinary chastisement, says to them, in effect, "because ye have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed out to yourselves,—cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, therefore, thine own wickedness shall correct thee; and thy backslidings shall reprove thee, know therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." In addition to such spiritual discipline, and chastisements, the disobedient wanderer from the way of understanding, is, also, in some instances, visited from the Divine hand, with *bereavements*, or other *afflictions;* with embarrassments and losses; and, it may be, *indigence*, as to worldly possessions, and advantages. All such chastisements, are divinely intended, to reclaim the wanderers, and bring them back to the path of obedience, and happiness. It is, ever, true, as scripturally declared, that the Lord "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, but for their profit;" that they may turn from evil,—become partakers of His holiness, and, thus, find *rest* and *peace* in the end.

We find recorded, in the Sacred Volume, many instances of Divine chastisements, for the sins and follies of the professed servants of the Lord. From His procedure, on other occa-

sions, there is good reason to conclude, that *some*, or *many* of the severe trials, hardships, and afflictions, which befel the Patriarch Jacob, were sent or permitted by the Lord, as a just chastisement, for his unkind and unrighteous conduct towards his brother. They were, however, as we see, made *ultimately*, to work for his spiritual good. We know, to a certainty, that neither the faithful and devoted Moses, nor the High Priest, Aaron, were permitted to enter the promised land of rest, because, as the Lord declared, they sanctified Him not, in the eyes of the Children of Israel, at the flowing of the waters, from the Rock at Meribah; but acted hastily, and unguardedly. This was felt by Moses, as a chastening dispensation; for on his earnestly entreating the Lord, that He would permit him to go up with the people, into the land, he was told "not to speak any more of the matter." The Divine Decree had been given, against it, and would not be reversed. The highly inspired and pious Psalmist, for his criminal conduct concerning Uriah the Hittite, was, in various forms, chastised and afflicted, nearly all the rest of his days; the sword having never after departed from his house, according to the divine declarations, as recorded in one of the cited texts. Even the deeply pious, and devotedly zealous Josiah, for his act of rashness, in going forth to battle, without seeking or obtaining the Divine direction, or permission, lost his life; for he had been warned by the King against whom he went, to forbear going against him, but it is said, he "hearkened not unto *the words of Necho, from the mouth of God*," who permitted him to be slain, by that foreign and idolatrous Power. This conduct by Josiah, seems to be an instance of the "sin unto death," mentioned in the first Epistle of John, while Mercy is extended to the soul. There are other instances mentioned in Scripture, of pious and generally righteous persons, being visited by the Lord, with *temporal Retributions*, for acts of disobedience and unfaithfulness, but these which have been mentioned may suffice, to show the just dealings, and the righteous, as well as mercifully designed *discipline*, and *chastisements* of God, towards even His own people. We, thus, see, how *just*, and *certain* in fulfilment, are the Divine declarations, that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," that they "may become partakers of His holi-

ness; and that such chastening, may, afterwards, yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby. From such instances of chastisements, let the Christian be warned and admonished, against every description of sin; not only because it is *dishonouring* to the holy religion he professes, and to the God of all his mercies, and to the Saviour who died to redeem him from all iniquity; but, because, by every act of transgression, he wrongs his own soul, by forfeiting and losing that sense of the Divine favour, and loving-kindness, which are better than life; and by, surely, being made to experience, other temporal retributions of an afflicting character. Such chastisements, form a part of the discipline, which the Lord, in mercy, exercises toward His people, to restrain them from evil, in the future, and to preserve them in the path of obedience. He, ever, graciously *wills* and *designs*, that they shall enjoy His *protection* and *favour*, while *here*, and the greatest measure of glory and happiness, in His *future* and *eternal* Kingdom. Let not the believer, then, murmur or complain, under any chastisements he is made to suffer, for his sins and follies, but rather let him "hear the rod, and who hath appointed it;" and say unto God,—"I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more;" and with the prophet,—personating the godly,—"I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until He return and plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness."

3. Temporal Retributions for Sins of the Ungodly.—"And they said, one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear, therefore, is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also, his blood is required." Gen. xlii, 21, 22.——"Then, God sent an evil Spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech; that the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal, might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech, their brother which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren." Judges ix.

23. 24.——57th V. "And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads; and upon them came the curse of Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal."——"But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul; and an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him." 1 Sam. xvi, 14.——"And it came to pass, about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died." 1 Sam. xxv, 38.——"For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did, they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants, the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land, to Assyria, unto this day." 2 Kings xvii, 22, 23.——"And the Lord sent against him," (Jehoiakim) "bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah, to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servants the prophets." 2 Kings, xxiv, 2.——"And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city, for God did vex them, with all adversity." 2 Chron. xv, 6.——"But Amaziah would not hear, for it came of God, that He might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom." 2 Chron. xxv, 20.——"He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct." Ps. xciv, 10. ——"Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee, know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God; and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." Is. ii, 19.——"And spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." 2 Pet. ii, 5, 6.

However *ignorance* may *deny*, or *Scepticism* may *doubt*, there is a general, or almost universal fulfilment of the Divine declarations, not only, that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;" but, also, that "the way of transgressors is hard;" and that, "there is no peace to the wicked." But *many*, will, doubtless, object, and say,—Do we not see, that the *ungodly* and the *wicked*, often possess very large

portions of the good things of this life; live in *affluence* and *ease*, and enjoy many earthly blessings, and advantages, of which the *godly* or *righteous* are *not possessed;* and as the Scripture declares, are seen spreading themselves "like a green bay tree:" But, even, of such a character it is added, "lo he passed away, and was not; I sought him, but he could not be found." Such persons,—as said in the book of Job,—are often "cut down in the open sight of others." But, admitting that they continue to old age, in the possession of such numerous earthly advantages, is it the *truth* that these advantages, invariably afford real enjoyment or *happiness?* Experience has shown, in innumerable instances, and throughout all ages, and in all lands, that such is not the case. Many of such persons, it is known, have, from *some*, or a *variety* of causes, been among the most unhappy of mortals. In the biography of one, who stood rather high in rank, and earthly advantages, it is mentioned, that while pursuing an ungodly and wicked course,—from which he was afterwards reclaimed to piety and virtue,—he said,—on seeing a dog come into the room,—"O that I were that dog." The stings of conscience made him miserable. There always have been, very many of the rich, and outwardly great, and flourishing of the earth, whose extensive possessions and advantages, have equally failed to secure them inward peace and enjoyment. It must, surely, be conceded, by all, that genuine happiness, does not depend, merely on *external things*. It must, ever, chiefly consist, in the *tone* and *temper* of the *mind;* and on the *inward* emotions and feelings. But, now, let us more particularly analyze, and view, this subject of the temporal afflictive retributions of the wicked, and ungodly. In the first place, it may truly be remarked, that, by all the arrangements of the infinitely wise and great Creator, both in His Providence, and in other modes, He has provided and established, that *true* and *permanent* happiness, can only be found, by any, in an *upright* and *virtuous* course of conduct. By those who possess the records of His Truth, it can only be secured, by *loving* Him, and going in the paths of a faithful *obedience* to His righteous Commands. He has declared, and it is constantly fulfilled, sooner or later, that "thorns and snares are in the way of the froward," and the ungodly; and, even, in this life, the wicked, in some forms, and in a large degree,

are "made to eat of the fruit of their doings." The desires and the efforts for *happiness*, are common to all, and by the wicked and the worldly, it is almost universally sought, in one, or more of the modes, of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." With far the greater number of them, it is chiefly sought, in the gratification of the bodily, or *sensual appetites*, and propensities; and by their irregular and excessive indulgence. Such a course, it is well known, sooner, or later, and often, very early, originates and establishes, great varieties of diseases, and bodily pains and afflictions. By the arrangements of the Creator, in our *bodily structure*, such diseases and sufferings, are necessarily connected with, and made to follow, from each and every description of such excesses. Being outrages on *Nature*, and directly opposed to the law of *self-preservation* from injury, divinely implanted in our natural frame, such diseases and pains, are made to serve as a part of the temporal retribution, and penalty, for that particular form or class of transgressions. This is, not only true, as to all irregular and unlawful bodily propensities, and indulgences, but, also, as to *excess* or *abuse*, in those natural desires and appetites, which are of a *lawful* description. Very large numbers of these votaries of sensuality, experience this mode of temporal retribution, or punishment. Of many of *these*, it may be said, in the language of Scripture, that, they "do not live out half their days;" and, in many instances, more or less of that half, is spent in bodily suffering.

But, again, if we look at those of the worldly and ungodly, who are seeking enjoyment in the pride of life,—in the career of ambition for place and Power;—in human Applause;—or the various modes and displays of vanity, we shall find, that most, or all of them, fail of securing, in any *satisfying measure*, the *happiness* they are so ardently seeking. In each and all of such courses, there are naturally and invariably originated, and prevail, more or less powerfully, *envies*, and *jealousies*, *contentions*, and *bitter aversions*; often *deep resentments*, *hatreds*, and *malice*, or other evil passions and feelings, which cause *emotions*, always *painful* to the mind, and not unfrequently even *tormenting*. All such evil passions, are, from their very nature, according to divine arrangements, productive of painful sensations, and, therefore, *these*, also,

are invariably, a part of the *temporal retribution*, to all such irreligious and sinful characters. The votaries of pleasure, and vanity, also, often experience disappointments and losses, which *prevent*, or *mar* their pursuits, or bring them into embarrassments and distresses; and often to *indigence*, or *poverty*. And, thus, *they*, also, are made to suffer retributive punishment, for their sins and follies.

If we look into Prisons, and Penitentiaries, or other Asylums for the wretched, or guilty, we see, also, in almost every case, the temporal retributions for sin. Even in Hospitals for the sick and diseased, a large portion are *there*, through sensual and criminal indulgences. The drunkard, and other inebriates, invariably suffer such retributive punishment. And the same, indeed, is the case, for every other forbidden and irregular sensual gratification.

Even the continued *intense*, and *excessive* employment of the *mental powers*, will occasion a *prostration*, *weakness*, and *suffering*, which may, also, be considered as a retribution, or penalty, for that description of inconsiderate and irregular conduct.

The excessive indulgence of the *affections*, also, though on lawful or innocent objects, often produce such painful consequences, as form a retribution of a severe and afflicting description. Whether, therefore, the *abuse*, or *excess*, relate to the *body*, to the *intellectual powers*, or the *affections*, a retribution, of more or less severity, is, by Divine Arrangements, demanded and inflicted.

But, if such be the results, in the cases of *excess* and *irregular indulgence* which have been specified, how much more marked and severe, may we expect to find, the temporal retributions, for the *profanity* and *wickedness* of transgressors, of a heinous and aggravated character. *These*, seldom, or ever, escape a retributive temporal punishment. Throughout both *sacred* and *secular* history, we find numerous instances of its justly merited, and severe infliction. The Divine dealings with the sanguinary Abimelech, and the men of Shechem, for their cruel murders, afford a striking instance of such retribution. The death of the unjust and wicked Nabal, by the *immediate* hand of the Lord, so early after his *drunkenness* and his base *ingratitude* to David, who had protected and preserved his servants and property, as recorded in one of the

ated texts, is another case of the same kind of retributive temporal punishment. The instances, also, of the ignominious deaths of the wicked and cruel Ahab, and Jezebel; and the distresses, and death, of the sanguinary and persecuting Saul, as scripturally recorded, are of similar descriptions. Many other individual instances of the like retributions are mentioned in the inspired volume.

As regards nations, and large numbers of persons, we, also, find in Scripture, many awful inflictions by the Divine hand, of temporal retributions, for their ungodliness and wickedness. The universal deluge of waters, by which all living creatures, on the earth, were destroyed, with the exception of one family;—The destruction of the wholly corrupt and profligate Sodom, and the other neighbouring profane and guilty Cities, by fire from Heaven;—The plagues and pestilences on Egypt;—The destruction of Pharaoh, and his Host, in the Sea:—The dispossession, and, nearly, entire extermination of the Seven Nations of Canaan, when their iniquity had "come to the full;"—The desolation and destruction of idolatrous Babylon, and the repeated captivities and sufferings of the Jewish People;—and their wide dispersion, and general ignominious condition, to the present day, are all, most marked and signal instances of Divine *temporal retribution*, for *ungodliness* and *sin*. In *these*, and all similar events, both as to individuals and Nations, are strikingly fulfilled, the Scripture declarations, that the Almighty and righteous Ruler often "strikes down wicked men, in the open sight of others;" "turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein:"—"chastiseth the Heathen;"—"overthroweth the wicked, for their wickedness;" and, in justice, manifests the truth of His Word, that, while "the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner." All such instances of temporal retribution, and punishment, have been divinely recorded, with a gracious design, as warnings and admonitions, to individuals and nations, throughout future generations, to induce them to turn from all sin, and evil, and "learn righteousness," when His "Judgments are abroad in the earth." It is a part of the righteous Government, and discipline, of a *just*, and also *merciful* God, to inflict such temporal retributive chastisements, that men may be warned and restrained from sin, and, thus,

be saved from its bitter consequences in this life, and from its punishment of endless misery in the Eternal World. Be admonished, therefore, O thou worldly and ungodly man, and cease from sin; and, "because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

4. Agencies and Means employed by God, for Effecting His Temporal Retributions for Sin.——"And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon, Sisera, the Captain of Jabin's Army, with his chariots, and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand." Jud. iv, 7.——"And the hand of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the Children of Ammon." Jud. x, 7.——"And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite." xi, 14. ——"And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of *Spoilers*, until He had cast them out of His sight." 2 Kings xvii, 20.——"The Lord stirred up against Jehoram, the Spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians. And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away," &c. 2 Chron. xxi, 16, 17.——"They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore, He brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young men, with the sword, &c. He gave them all into his hand." 2 Chron. xxxvi, 16, 17.——"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand, is mine indignation; I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath, will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey." Is. x, 5, 6.——"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them." (the Babylonians.) Is. xiii, 17.—— "And He" (the Lord) "said unto them,–Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain; go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city." Ezek. ix, 7.

No proof, or argument, can be needed, to *verify* the sublime truth, which is so apparent to the slightest exercise of reason, that the Almighty and infinitely wise Being, who created and sustains all things, can never be at a loss for means,

to effect His purposes, of whatever description. Neither, can He *err* or *mistake*, as to the instruments most *suitably* adapted, for securing their fulfilment. As Scripture declares, when He sends the waters of the thick cloud upon the earth, He does it, "for correction, or for His land, or for mercy." We are told, that "not a sparrow falls to the ground, without His knowledge." "The pestilence that walketh in darkness," and "the destruction that wasteth at noon day," as well as the blessings of the dews to refresh the soil, and invigorate the seeds in the earth; and the turning of "the wilderness into standing water, and the dry ground into water springs," and there making "the hungry to dwell," and to "sow the fields," so as to yield them "fruits of increase," have all been *designed* in His infinite *wisdom*, and have proceeded from His *Almighty* and *Righteous* Hand.

We learn from the Sacred Records, that not only some of the most powerful natural elements, but some of the smallest, and, in general, most *insignificant* and *harmless creatures*, were made the Divine instruments, for inflicting the most severe sufferings on the Egyptian oppressors, for their injustice and cruelties to the people of Israel. The *animalcula*, and the *insect* which cannot be discerned without the aid of a *Microscope*, and which destroy the fruits of the earth, and occasion famine and death; as well as the *fire* and the *flood*, the desolating *hail*, the *Tornado* and *Earthquake*, are His Agents and Ministers, to execute His purposes, and have often been signally employed to inflict His just retributions, on the various classes of the wicked.

Human instruments, also, have, ever, been extensively employed, by the Divine Ruler, to accomplish such purposes of temporal retribution. In almost innumerable instances, by an overruling Providence, one guilty Nation has been invested with power, and by its invasions and cruel inflictions, has been made the agent, for effecting such retributions on Nations and Countries, equally, or more *ungodly*, *profane*, and *unrighteous*. Who can doubt, that since the close of Revelation, those sanguinary and desolating scourges of humanity,—Mahomet, Bajazet, and Timour, Alaric, Genseric, and Attila, and in our own time, the mighty and renowned Napoleon, were made such Divine Agents and Instruments; some of them, for punishing *idolatrous*, *heretical*, and *profligate* Na-

tions; and others, for the same purpose, *those* that were *impious, persecuting* and cruel; or *unjust, hypocritical,* and *immoral?* To all such Agents of just retributions, may, truly, be applied these words of the Almighty Ruler, towards an idolatrous Nation,—"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical Nation; and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey." Concerning all the Agents of Retribution which have been named, and of many others, of similar descriptions, in different ages, it has been true, as in the case of that impious King of Assyria, that after executing the Divine purposes of chastisement, they have, in turn, been punished, in just retribution for their own *impiety* and *guilt;* and, because, they did not design or execute those purposes, from pious or righteous motives, but, merely, from *ambition, vain glory,* and *pride.*

We know, from Scripture, that by the Divine commands, the people of Israel, were made the instruments for the *retributive punishment* of the idolatrous and profligate nations of Canaan; also of the inhuman and wicked Amalekites, the corrupt nations of Moab, and Ammon, and other Nations and Tribes, of similar character. The idolatrous and haughty Nebuchadnezzar, was, also, made such an instrument, for inflicting the like retributions, not only on many other corrupt and idolatrous Nations, but, also, on the chosen and professed people of the Lord. Of that scourge of the Nations, it was said by the Lord, "Behold I will send and take all the families of the North, and Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, my Servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof; and against all these Nations round about, and will utterly destroy them." "And these Nations shall serve the King of Babylon, seventy years; and when seventy years are accomplished, I will punish the King of Babylon, and that Nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and will make it perpetual desolations." We know that all these *predicted retributions* have been literally fulfilled. Of another idolatrous sovereign, also, the Lord,—who called him "a ravenous bird from the East,"—declared him to be,—"the man that executeth my counsel, from a far country." Similar instances of *retributive* punishment, by human agency

might be multiplied from the pages, both of *sacred* and *secular* history. Scarcely any enlightened believer in Divine Revelation, will doubt, that the scenes of carnage, and destruction; and the varied afflictions, so extensively prevailing, in the war now raging in the American States, are Divinely overruled, and made to serve, as *retributive chastisements*, for the *infidelity*, and for the *cruel oppressions*, and atrocious *barbarities of Slavery*, in *one* division of those countries; and the *covetous spirit*, and *practices*, the *profane heresies*, the *hypocrisies*, and *immoralities*, of the *other* section of them.

The Angels of darkness, and wickedness, are, also, by *Providential arrangements*, and Divine *permission*, made to subserve the purposes of *temporal* Retribution for sin. It is recorded of Saul, the disobedient and impious King of Israel, that "the spirit of the Lord departed from him; and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." The temporary departures of the evil Spirit, were doubtless, mercifully intended by the Lord, to afford the guilty and unhappy King, time and opportunities, to repent, and obtain forgiveness. The entry of the evil spirit into the King, may be considered as by Divine *permission*, for there are many instances recorded in Scripture, of diabolical, or other wicked acts and occurrences, which,—in consistency with the Divine character for Truth, and Goodness,—must be considered, as merely *permitted*, for effecting *retributive*, or other *righteous* purposes. It has been pointedly and well observed, by a learned commentator, on this diabolic possession of Saul, that "what God fills not, the Devil will." In the 78th Psalm, in the recital of the plagues inflicted by the Lord upon the Egyptians, it is declared that "He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil Angels among them." We read, also, that a licentious Corinthian, was, by the authority of an inspired Apostle, adjudged to be "delivered to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved, in the day of the Lord Jesus." The same Apostle, also, in one of his Epistles to Timothy,—referring to some, who had put away a good conscience, and made shipwreck of the faith, says,—"Of whom is Hymeneus, and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

And, now, considering all the varied instances of Divine

Temporal Retribution which have been referred to, it may be asked, is not the same Holy and Almighty Sovereign, still reigning and ruling over all? And *wise*, and *righteous*, and *unchangeable*, as He is, can it be presumed, that He is *now*, *less observant*, or *less regardful*, of the conduct and affairs of His *rational* and *accountable* creatures on the Earth; or less offended with *ungodliness* and *sin;* or less disposed to inflict His just Temporal Retributions on guilty individuals and Nations? Verily not! but on all these points, His wise and just *designs* and *retributive operations*, remain unchanged. It is deplorably true, that great numbers of professed believers in Divine Revelation, and who cannot but admit, as authentic, the instances produced, as well as others of a similar character therein recorded, indulge and express their *scepticism*, or rather their *infidelity*, as to such Divine overruling government, and agency, and *retributions*, in the *natural*, or other extraordinary events, now, from time to time, occurring. They will, always, be ready to assign, for the occurrence of such events, some causes, or reasons, of a *natural*, or *moral*, or *political*, or other merely *human*, and *secondary* description. In thus judging, they do, in effect, disallow the *superintendance*, and *Government* of God, in the affairs of the World; and deny His concern and regard, as to *righteousness* or *wickedness*, in the earth; and His just *temporal* Retributions, on impious and high handed sinners. Such persons, manifest, very plainly, the natural pride of the human heart; and its opposition to the Divine Authority, and Rule. But, however infidels and sceptics, may *doubt* or *deny*, on the subject, it is still true, as scripturally declared, and is constantly being verified, that the Lord reigneth and ruleth, and "putteth down one, and setteth up another." Let the Nations, therefore, "know themselves to be but men." The consideration of such a Divine overruling Government, and of Temporal Chastisements for Sin, while it inspires the true Christian with confidence, and produces patient submission, in all trials and afflictions; is well adapted, to alarm the *ungodly*, and *unrighteous*, and should induce them to abandon their *impiety* and *wickedness*, lest they should be made to experience the fulfilment of the awful Scripture prediction,—"He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

SERMON XIII.

ON THE

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

"Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job xix, 26, 27.——"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body, shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew, is as the dew of herbs; and the Earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. xxvi, 19.——"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth, shall awake; some to everlasting life; and some to shame, and everlasting contempt." Dan. xii, 2.——"They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more." "Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him." Luke xx, 35, 36, 37, 38.——"The hour is coming, in the which, all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John v, 28, 29.——"This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing; but

should raise it up again, at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up, at the last day." John vi, 39, 40.——"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since, by Man, came death, by Man, came, also, the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive." "Christ, the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's, at His coming." 1 Cor. xv, 20, 21, 22, 23.——V. 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is, Death."——V. 42, 43, 44, "So, also, is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."——V. 50, 51, 52, 53, "Flesh and blood, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption, inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible, must put on incorruption, and this mortal, must put on immortality."——"Knowing, that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us, also, by Jesus, and shall present us with you." 2 Cor. iv, 14.——"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned, like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby, He is able, even, to subdue all things unto Himself." Phil. iii, 21.——"The Lord, Himself, shall descend from Heaven, with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead, in Christ, shall rise first." 1 Thes. iv, 16.

This Sublime Truth of the Resurrection of the Body, so consoling to the righteous man, though not *prominently* set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures, has been, most clearly and fully declared, in our *new*, and *brighter*, and more *Spiritual* Revelation. So explicitly, and plainly, indeed, has it been made known in this revelation, that none will disbelieve, or even question it, except the open enemies of all revealed Truth; or some, comparatively few, who, though professing to believe Christianity, to be of Divine Origin, yet deny, not

only *this one*, but others, of its principal doctrines: and are, therefore, in reality, *infidels*, as to the sacred system itself. From several circumstances, it would seem, that the Patriarchs and other faithful servants of God, in all ages of the former dispensations of the true religion, had some *presentiments* or *ideas*, that there would be a resurrection; and if not of the bodies of *all* men, yet at least, of the bodies of the godly and righteous. Whether they derived such sentiments, or opinions, from any early Divine communications, on the subject, and through their continued *tradition;* or from any other real or supposed source, or origin, can, of course, only be conjectured. It is highly probable, that there were witnesses of Enoch's translation from the world, in his body; and from this, it might well have been presumed, or conjectured, that at some period after death, the *bodies*, as well as the souls of the righteous, would be called, by their Creator, into the eternal World. And the same opinion would be further strengthened, by the similar translation of Elijah; which took place in the presence of several witnesses. The presumption of the existence of such an opinion, is, also rendered very strong, from the numerous scriptural facts indicating the concern manifested by many, or, indeed, all of the early Patriarchs, as to the places for the interment of their bodies; and their earnest and express directions on the point. Abraham, would not receive, as a gift, any piece of ground, as a burial place for his beloved Sarah, but purchased one, at the full value, although he knew, that his posterity were afterwards, by the Divine promise and grant, to possess the whole land. He, also, was buried there. His grandson Jacob, when on his death-bed, in Egypt, solemnly charged his Sons, to carry up his body to Canaan, and deposit it in the same Cave of burial, saying,—"There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his Wife; there they buried Isaac, and Rebekah his Wife; and there I buried Leah." Joseph, also, when dying, took an oath of his brethren, that they would carry up his bones from Egypt, when they departed for Canaan; and we read, that his request was fulfilled.

According to some of the learned, Job lived during the partriarchal times; or, as others have concluded, at or about the time of Moses. We know that he believed in the resurrection of the body, for scarcely any words, in favour of the

doctrine, can be stronger, than the following passage in ch. xix of the book, bearing his name:—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet, in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Every material point in the doctrine of the resurrection, is contained in these words. The time of the Redeemer's appearance on the earth is mentioned, as, "in the latter day;" and whether this is considered as the time of his *first* appearance, in the body, or his *second* Advent, at the end of the world, is quite *immaterial* on the point, for, in either case, the subsequent words show, that it would be, *after* the worms had destroyed Job's body, and his reins were consumed: And he says, that *after* this destruction, he "would see God,"—only another name for the same Redeemer;— in his "*own flesh*;" and that his *own eyes* would behold Him, and not another's. And all this, he declared he would see, in the same *identical flesh*, or *body* and with his *own*, or the *same identical eyes* which he possessed when speaking, and *after* the same *flesh* and *reins*, had been consumed and destroyed. The text in Isaiah, at the head of this Discourse, is, also, very pointed and strong in support of the doctrine. It is so, even, if taken in a figurative sense, as descriptive of the corrupt and dormant state of the Jews at that period, as to piety and obedience; for, to use the words of a learned Divine in commenting on the passage,—"It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, was, at that time, *a popular and common doctrine* for an image which is assumed, in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether *poetical* or *prophetical*, must be an image commonly known and understood, otherwise it will not answer the purpose, for which it is assumed." The words in the passage,—"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise," are about as strong and express, as any that can be employed, both as to the resurrection itself; and, also, as to the same *identical bodies* being raised. The words,—"The earth shall cast out the dead," will not at all apply to *new* bodies, composed, altogether, of other materials. The cited passage in Daniel, which declares, that "them that sleep in the dust of

the earth shall awake," is, also, strong on the same *two* points of the *resurrection*, and the *identity*. In the two last cited passages, as well as others, the *places* where the dead shall rise, show, that the *same* bodies which *died*, shall *rise*;—the words in Isaiah, being,—"the *earth* shall *cast out the dead*;" and in Daniel,—"*them* that *sleep* in the *dust of the earth* shall *awake*." The words *sleep*, and *awake*, imply, that when we arise from the dead, our bodies will be very much the same, as they are, when we awake from sleep. The Pharisees in the time of our Saviour, and the Apostles, fully believed in the resurrection of the dead, as we find, from what is recorded in Acts xxiii, when Paul was making his defence before the Jewish Council. They had, *then*, no other means of knowledge concerning it, than their Countrymen had possessed for many previous Ages.

The New Testament Scriptures, however, so frequently and clearly declare the whole of the doctrine, that, as before remarked, none but open and confirmed infidels regarding revelation, and others of similar character, will deny, or question it. The words of the Saviour, that,—"all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," and that, "of all which the Father" had given him, He should "lose nothing," but should "raise it up again, at the last day," are conclusive, both as to the resurrection, and as to the *body* laid in the *grave*, and the *body raised*, being *identical*. The words cannot be applied to the *spirit*, for we know that *this* is not held in the earthly grave, but, at death, departs to the place of separate spirits. The words in the last mentioned passage,—"I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," show, that He was not even to lose the *body*; and the word *it*, evidently means, that the *same body* which had been given to Him by the Father, should be received by Him again, from the grave. The passage in the 15th Ch. of 1st Corinthians,—"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept," also show, both the resurrection itself, and that the body *raised*, is the same as that which was laid in the *grave*. We, all, know that the *harvest* of any kind, is of the same nature and qualities, as the *first fruits* of it, which are gathered. Likewise, the harvest of the bodies gathered from the graves, and other places where they had been deposited, will be of the *same nature*,

and as *identically the same*, as was the body of the Saviour; when His Spirit departed from it, and returned to it again, at His resurrection. In the same Chapter of the Corinthians, it is said,—"Christ the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's, at His coming,"—evidently meaning, that He will then gather the harvest, of the same bodies, which had remained in their earthly graves. The plain idea of a *resurrection*, requires, that the self *same body* that *died*, should *rise again*. Nothing can be said to be *raised again* but that *very body* that *died*. As has been truly remarked,—"If God give to our souls, at the last day, a *New Body*, *this* cannot be called the resurrection of *our* body, because that word plainly implies, the *fresh* production of *what was before*. If the *same body* do not rise again, what need can there be of *opening the graves* at the end of the World? The graves can *give up* no bodies, but those *they received*." In the same chapter of that Epistle to the Corinthians, are the words,—"This corruptible, must put on incorruption; and this mortal, must put on immortality." By the words "*this* mortal," and "*this* corruptible," can *only* be meant, *that body* which we now carry about with us; and which shall be laid in the grave, and become dust.

But like the sceptics on the subject, in the Apostle's day, and through all ages since, there are still some,—and even among those who profess to believe in christianity,—who object, and say, How can these things be? How are the dead raised? And with what bodies do they come? They may be answered in the same words the inspired Apostle returned to the questions;—"Thou fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die. But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." He is, indeed, a fool in the scripture sense, who asks such questions, in the way of objection. He would limit the power of Him, who is declared to be the Almighty; and who has said, "Is any thing too hard for me." Even in the light of human reason, there can seem nothing more extraordinary or difficult, in collecting together the dust of a dead body, and *re-forming* it, than in forming it, at first, out of particles of the earth. No greater Wisdom, or Power, can be supposed to be requisite in the one case, than in the other. Such an objector, is, indeed blind and foolish, because he is constantly seeing and know-

ing, that seeds of every size and kind, that are sown in the earth, become corrupt and die; and their dust is mixed with the surrounding earth; and out of that decayed and dissolved matter, *plants* spring up, in every instance, precisely of the same kind as those which bore the seeds which were sown; and these last plants, or stalks, produce, respectively the same descriptions of seeds, as those which were placed in the earth, and became corrupt and dissolved. He knows all this, but he cannot comprehend, or describe, the *manner* or *processes*, by which the whole has been brought to pass. The wisest of men, cannot comprehend or explain, the particulars relating to the complete formation of a human body in the womb. There are numerous operations constantly going on, all through the natural world, which we believe, and know, to be *true* and *certain* in their effects, and yet they are as *mysterious*, and as far beyond our comprehension, as this doctrine of the resurrection of the *same body*, which had been laid in a grave, and turned into dust. It is said by some, that *matter is indestructible*, and possibly it is so, except annihilated by a Divine operation. According to what are called the principles of Natural Philosophy, there are many *transmutations* and *changes*, effected by certain chemical, or other processes, and by some other operations and the use of certain substances, the metal, or other body operated upon, can be brought back to its first state. Gold, which is such a solid metal, can, by certain chemical operations, be made to appear as a *liquor*; and next be made to look like *salt*; may, then, be made part of the *fuel of a flame*; next be reduced to *glass*, then be reduced to a *transparent powder*; next be made to form a *fulminating calx*, stronger than gunpowder; and, yet, through all these transmutations, it still retains its *nature*, and by chemical operations, can be reduced to its *metallic* form. Mercury, also, may be put into different shapes. Sometimes it is like a *vapour*; sometimes like *simple water*, sometimes like a *red*, or *white*, or *yellow powder*; and sometimes like a *crystalline salt*, or *malleable metal*; and yet the Artist will soon reduce it to its *native* form. But, none of these operators, or Artists, can fully comprehend, the secret and mysterious causes, or principles, which really produced such various changes; or the *original* sources, or reasons, for their production. As a certain learned writer has said, "surely the

Chemistry of Heaven, is much more efficacious, to turn our *dead Ashes*, into *living Bodies*." Our weak knowledge, is, indeed, altogether insufficient, to determine what physical, or other means, the wise Author of the Universe may employ, to bring the Resurrection to pass.

A learned Divine, in treating of this subject,—of the same body being raised,—has employed the following language;—"God can distinguish, and keep unmixed from all other bodies, the particular dust, into which our several bodies are dissolved; and can gather it together, and join it again, how far soever dispersed asunder. He is infinite, both in knowledge and power. 'He knoweth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.' He can tell the number of the sands on the sea shore, and is it at all incredible, that He should distinctly know, the several particles of dust, into which the bodies of men are mouldered; and plainly discern to whom they belong; and the various changes they have undergone? Why should it be thought strange, that He who at the first formed us, whose eyes 'saw our substance yet being imperfect:' from whom we were not hid, when we were 'made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth,' should know every part of our bodies, and every particle of dust whereof we were composed? All the parts, into which men's bodies are dissolved, however they seem to us, carelessly scattered over the face of the earth, are yet carefully laid up, by God's wise disposal, till the day of restoration of all things." With reference to the objection, that the bodies of men are often devoured by other animals, or mixed and incorporated with other bodies, the same Divine has properly answered;—"They are preserved in the waters and fires, in the birds and beasts, till the last trumpet shall summon them to their former habitation." He might have added, and also from plants and vegetables, and other places of retention. He has further answered the sceptical objectors, as follows;—"Can they tell me, how their own bodies were fashioned, and curiously wrought? How was the first drop of blood made, and how came the heart and veins and arteries to receive it? Of what, and by what means, were the nerves and fibres made? What fixed the little springs in their due places, and fitted them for the several uses for which they now serve? How was the brain distinguished from the other parts of the

body, and filled with spirits, to move and animate the whole? How came the body to be fenced with bones and sinews, to be clothed with skin and flesh, distinguished into various muscles? Let them but answer these few questions, about the mechanism of our own bodies, and I will answer all the difficulties concerning the resurrection of them. But if they cannot do this, without having recourse to the infinite power, and wisdom, of the FIRST CAUSE, let them know, that the same power and wisdom can reanimate it, after it is turned to dust."

The words of our Lord, in the 6th chap. of John,—"I will raise him up at the last day," prove that it is the *same body* that will be raised,—the word *him*, showing that *identity;* for the assertion could not apply, or be true, if it were a new and different body, composed altogether of other particles; for it must be borne in mind, that it is only the *body* that is spoken of; the *spirit* of the person, never having been in the grave, but having passed into the eternal world at death. The following scripture passages;—"It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;" and the other connected passages on the subject in 1 Cor. xv; also the text in Phil. iii, 21,—"who shall change our vile body, that it may be made like unto His glorious body;" and the passage in 1 Thess. iv, 16,—"The dead in Christ, shall rise first," all imply, that the *same bodies* will be raised, that were laid in the *earth*.

But, though, the scriptures so plainly declare, that the *new*, or spiritual body, shall be made out of the materials of the *natural* one, which was laid in the grave, it does not follow, that the *whole* of the materials which belonged to that body, throughout all its changes, while on earth, will be used, in the formation of that spiritual body. It does not seem needful, in order to its *identity*, and to denominate it the *same body*, that the *new* body should consist of every individual part, or particle, which had, *at any time*, composed the old one. But on this particular point, we have no scriptural information, and therefore any positive assertion, or opinion concerning it, would not only be useless, but presumptuous and improper. The Wise and Almighty Architect, will arrange and execute the whole glorious work, in accordance with all His other perfect designs and operations. It is perfectly

sufficient for the faith and comfort of every true believer in Divine revelation, that his Almighty and faithful God and Saviour, has declared, that He will raise up his mortal body, from the dust of death, and "fashion it like unto His own glorious body;" and will restore to it again, the spirit, of which, for a season, death had deprived it. We are sufficiently informed in Scripture, concerning the nature and qualities of the new and spiritual body; and these qualities, are set in contrast, to those, which appertained to the earthly one. We are told that "this corruptible, one is to put on incorruption." This new body will never decay, or be subject to pain, or sickness of any kind; to hunger or thirst, or any other of the infirmities and troubles, which so frequently weaken, and at last bring down this earthly tabernacle. *This*, it is further said, is "sown in dishonour," being subject to dissolution; but it will, as to the *righteous*, be raised in glory, to shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of light and glory, being, by the Saviour's grace and power, "made like unto His own glorious body." It is, also, said, that this earthly body, "is sown in weakness, but it will be raised in power." It will never feel any weakness, or weariness, but will, ever, be lively and active; and as has been said, by a certain writer, "shall be as fire; as active and nimble as our thoughts." Again, it is said;—"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body;" *spiritualized*, and *refined*, from all earthly grossness; and made a fit instrument for the soul, in all its heavenly employments; and throughout Eternity, never weary of celebrating the praises of its God and Saviour.

There does, indeed, seem a fitness and propriety, that the *same* bodies of the *wicked*, which they made the instruments for the commission of their *sins*, should partake of their *punishment:* and that the *same* bodies of the *righteous*, which were denied many sensual gratifications; and which for the sake of the Saviour's love and service, toiled and suffered; and many of them were tortured, and martyred, for avowing and maintaining His Truth, should be raised, and enjoy their reward in glory and happiness. *Then*, as to the righteous, will the Scripture promise be, finally, and fully realized, that, "the creature itself, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Children of God." We learn sufficiently from Scripture, that the resurrection

body, will receive the same Spirit which inhabited it, in the mortal state. All, except a few Atheists, or other descriptions of Infidels, believe that the soul is *immortal*. This, was, ever, the almost universal sentiment, among, even, heathen Nations. It has, certainly, been the universal belief, under all dispensations of the true religion. None professing, or pretending to believe in Divine revelation, will deny the immortality of the soul; and that it will appear at the final Judgment, to "give an account of the deeds done in the body." We know, that it is the *Soul*, or immortal Being, that moves and employs the *body* in all its actions. The body has no power to move or act, but as it is influenced, and set in motion, by the living *spiritual principle within*. This principle, at death, departs immediately into the place of separate Spirits, and enters either into bliss, or misery. All this we know, from many plain declarations of Scripture. The appearance of Samuel to Saul,—the declaration of the Saviour, that God, is the "God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living*;"—the parable of the Rich Man, and Lazarus;—the restoration of the Saviour's friend Lazarus to his body, after *four days* separation;—the appearance of Moses and Elias, at the transfiguration, more than a thousand years after their deaths;—and our Lord's declaration to the penitent thief,—"This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," though his body, after death, remained on the earth; with many other instances mentioned in the Scriptures, prove the continued *existence* of the *Soul*, after its *separation* from the *body*. It is not needful, here, to discuss particularly, the place, or Nature of the State, in which the Soul remains, after its separation from the body, and until their *reunion* at the resurrection. There are various suppositions on the subject. It is quite sufficient, that we know from the plain testimony of Scripture, that the Spirits of the *Just*, at death, pass into a state of *happiness*; and the Spirits of the *wicked*, into one of *misery*. The Scriptures declare, that "the body shall return to the dust, from whence it was taken, and the Spirit shall return, unto God who gave it;" and that "we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or bad." From this text, alone, it is

clear, that the *same Spirit*, will appear in the *same body*, at that Judgment Seat; and that *both* will, respectively, receive their final award, of *everlasting happiness* or *misery*.

The doctrine of the resurrection, is well adapted to afford the Christian, the most comfortable contemplations, in all the calamities, or afflictions of this probationary state. In order, however, that each one of us, may make this comfort his own, both a *faith* and a *practice*, should, ever, be fervently and actively maintained, such in *character*, as were possessed and exhibited by the zealous and devoted Paul, who in his defence before Felix, declared, "I have hope towards God, that there will be a resurrection, both of the Just and Unjust; and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward men." Let all, thus believe and act, that so "when our earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may have a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."

SERMON XIV.

ON THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

"The Lord shall endure for ever; He hath prepared His Throne for Judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness; He shall minister judgment to the people, in uprightness." Ps. ix, 7, 8.——"For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the Earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." Ps. xcvi, 13. ——"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. xii, 14.——"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John v, 22.——"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John xii, 48.——"Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained." Acts xvii, 31.——"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." Rom. ii, 16. ——"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." "So, then, every one of us, shall give an account of himself, to God." Rom. xiv, 10, 12.——"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or bad." 2 Cor. v, 10.——"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this, the judgment." Heb. ix, 27.——"Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of His Saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude v. 14, 15.

No Doctrine, in any System of religious belief, has been more universally held, than this,—of a *future Judgment* of all mankind, as to the *good*, and the *evil*, of their conduct, and character, while in this life. Not only by the professors of the true religion, from the *first*, and under its several dispensations, and throughout all ages, has it been the invariable belief; but also among heathen and idolatrous Nations and Tribes, it has been,—to say the least,—the common, or general supposition or sentiment. Among such of these last as were the most civilized, and advanced in arts and improvements, this belief has appeared, in all their systems of *Theology*,—from the writings of their *Poets*,—the speeches of their *Orators*,—the systems of their *Philosophers*; and from various other *memorials*, as well as common transactions, and modes of conduct; as shown in historical, and other records concerning them. They, all, entertained the belief, that their supposed supernatural Deities, took cognizance of human affairs, and the conduct of men; and would, at last, rectify all the *seeming* irregular dispensations in the world, concerning them; and would discriminate, and judge, as to the behaviour of each individual, while in this life; and would either *reward*, or *punish* him according as his conduct,—by their *standard*, or *estimate*, of *right*, and *wrong*, *good* and *evil*,—had been either *virtuous*, or *vicious*. One of their celebrated writers, who has generally been thought to be rather of *atheistical* sentiments, has said,—"God brought man out of *nothing*, to *something*, and is in Heaven, beholding the *just* and *unjust* and writing down, in books, every man's actions, in order to recompense them, according to their deeds, in that day, which He, himself, hath appointed."

The power or faculty of *conscience*, which dwells in every rational human being, in a greater or lesser degree of perception and activity, informs him, as to the moral *good* or *evil* of his *feelings*, *motives*, and *actions*; in the *wicked*, always to their annoyance, and often with tormenting influence and power. This faculty, which, in Divine mercy, has been implanted in the soul, not only, in general, directs and informs us, what we ought to *do*, and what to *avoid*: but, also checks or encourages, according as what we have done, or are about to do, is either *good* or *evil*. It so operates, in cases unknown to others, and where there is no apprehension of either re-

ward or *punishment*, in this life. Unless in the case of those who have become thoroughly hardened, through the practice of iniquity, the distressing action of conscience, will become more and more powerful, as the sinner approaches the end of his life. Its active recollections and influence, will then, not only withhold from him every source of relief, or hope, but will fill his dying hours, with despair and misery; though probably, those feelings may, in part, at least, be concealed from others. On the contrary, the true christian, who has sincerely loved and served his God, when about to pass into the eternal world, will experience, not only the supporting and consoling witness of the Divine Spirit, but will be able, through grace, to say,—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Such characters can, also, add,—"we have the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God. we have had our conversation in the world." The difference of *feelings* and *apprehension*, in the two cases, arises from the conviction in each, that the God before whom he is about to appear, "will bring into judgment" every outward act, and "secret thing" and "reward every man, according to his works."

In looking into the affairs of this world, with reference to *virtue* and *vice*, *prosperity* and *adversity*, *enjoyment* and *suffering*, we certainly do not see, in the administration of them, the signs of an exact *Justice* and *Goodness*. In numerous instances, the *best* men, are the most *deficient*, and in very many others, the *ungodly* and the *wicked*, are the most *abounding*, in the possessions and advantages of this life. As we know that God is a *Just*, and *Good* Being; and considering this disparity of circumstances, it might even independant of scriptural declarations on the subject, reasonably be inferred, and concluded, that He would ordain and execute a future Judgment; in which, all the uncertain and irregular dispensations of His Providence, as they appear to us,—shall be cleared and adjusted; and the *righteous*, and the *sinner*, receive, respectively, the just recompense, of what their works in this world have deserved. A learned and pious Divine, in treating of this subject, has written as follows:—"In this world, indeed, there is a great deal of *darkness*, sitting upon the face of God's dispensations. The fate of the

righteous, and the *wicked*, is *shuffled* in common and promiscuous events, as if the distinctions of *Good*, and *Evil*, were nothing but empty names, and Terms of Philosophy. Nay sometimes, a man fares the worse for his Integrity, and those who are "Righteous, make themselves a prey;" their virtue is discountenanced and oppressed; they are pursued with a succession of cross accidents; and oftentimes struggle with all difficulties and misfortunes of life. The Author to the Hebrews, hath told us, how roughly the most illustrious saints, 'of whom the world was not worthy,'—were used. On the other side, it hath been observed, how strangely *wickedness* and *injustice* have prospered; what returns of advantage, have been brought in, by *fraud* and *circumvention*; how often *Rapine* and oppression, have made their way to *greatness* and *Power*; and, what is more surprising, how they seem to enjoy them, with as much *serenity*, as they acquired them by *Injustice*. But though Providence, for very good reasons, suffers *virtue* and *vice*, to be very *unsuitably* treated *here*; though God may bear with the wicked, for a while, either for their repentance, or more exemplary punishment; though He may try the faith and constancy of His servants, for their greater advantage, yet the marks of the Divine favour, or displeasure, will not always, be thus *mystical* and *concealed*. When 'the Book of Remembrance,' which the Prophet Malachi mentions, is called over, *then* there will be a visible and *everlasting* distinction made, and the whole intelligent creation will, plainly, 'discern, between him that served God and him that served him not.'"

But far above, and *beyond* all, merely, human thoughts and conclusions on the subject, however just and reasonable, we have the positive and infallible Word of the Just and Holy Judge Himself, that He "will, hereafter, bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be *good*, or whether it be *evil*;" and "will render to every man, according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality,—eternal life;—but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good; for there is no respect of persons with God." None will be

so *great* as to be *excus d;* none so *mean* as to be *overlooked.* High and low, rich and poor, one with another, will meet at the same righteous Bar of Trial and Judgment. The rich, and great ones of the Earth, have, often, at *worldly Tribunals*, had great regard entertained for their *wealth* and *dignities*, and temporal *superiority*, among their fellow men, and been treated, and favoured, accordingly; but at that infallibly *just Tribunal*, Princes, and Nobles, and the most mighty and exalted of the Earth, will, like the poorest and meanest among men, be judged, according to their religious and moral qualities and conduct. To employ the eloquent and beautiful language of Pollock, that pious and eminent Poet;—

"It was a Congregation vast of Men,
"Of unappendaged, and unvarnished Men,
"Of plain, unceremonious, human beings,
"Of all but moral character bereaved.
"His vice, or virtue, now, to each remained, alone.
"All else, with their grave-clothes, men had
"Put off, as badges, worn by mortal, not
"Immortal Man; alloy, that could not pass
"The scrutiny of Death's refining fires."

We all know, that the rich and mighty, are subject to the vicissitudes of life, and to sickness, pain, and death, like all others; and whatever may be the retinue, and pomp, and ceremony, in committing their bodies to the Tomb, their spirits go naked and unarmed into the other World, deprived of their power, riches, and honours, which dazzled the eyes of men here. The solemn, and, indeed, dreadful reflection, is, that as the talents committed to their trust, were more, and greater, than were possessed by others, if they did not duly improve them, but perverted and abused them, to purposes and actions of *impiety* and *unrighteousness*, their account and condemnation will be the more severe, for, as the Author of the Book of Wisdom says;—"A sharp Judgment shall be to them that are in High Places. Mighty men, will be mightily tormented. For He, who is Lord over all, shall fear no man's person; neither shall He stand in awe of any man's greatness, for He hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike. But a sore trial shall come upon the mighty." The poor, as to this world's possessions, will not be exempted from the

judgment, as though God had entrusted nothing to *them*. They will have to give an account, as to the manner in which they bore their poverty; whether they bore it with *humility*, and were *patient* in *privation* and *suffering*; contented with a little, and submitted to the will of God, without murmuring or repining: and exercised a cheerful dependance on Providence, for the daily supply of their necessities.

As there are great differences in this life, as to rank and station, and worldly possessions, so there are, also, as great inequalities as to mental power, and capacity, and the means and opportunities of attaining useful knowledge, especially of a religious character, in regard to the various duties of life. But all inequalities, as to a greater or lesser capacity,—more or less means of useful instruction and knowledge,—faults, or miscarriages of education;—the possession, or the want of the means of grace, and of religious improvement;—and as to the enjoyment, or deficiency, of various other advantages,—will all be accurately and righteously adjusted, and reconciled, and every thing will be brought to the most perfectly *equitable* level, and proportions, by the infinitely wise and impartial Judge. He has, indeed, informed us, of the Rule by which he will proceed, in reference to all such *inequalities*, where He says,—"that Servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

It appears from the Scriptures, that all mankind will appear together, at the Divine Tribunal, and be Judged at once. This, seems clear, from these words of the Lord Jesus, who is to be the Judge;—"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His Glory; and before Him shall be gathered all Nations, and He shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand; but the goats on the left."

The *universality* of the Judgment, will extend, not only to all *persons* but to all *things*, for the Scripture declares, that God "will bring every work into Judgment, with every secret

thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;" and again it says that, "the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and will make manifest the counsels of the heart." The reason for such a Judgment, arises from the evident truth, that the difference of *moral good*, and *evil*, depends, precisely, upon the *design*, and *intention*, with which a thing was *said* or *done*. We know, that in very many instances, the same acts, in appearance, proceed from varieties of feelings and motives. One person may *pray*, and give *alms*, from pious or benevolent motives, or perform certain actions relating to individuals, or his country, from righteous or patriotic feelings; and another may do the same acts, to be seen of men, and gain a reputation for *piety* and *benevolence*, in the one case; or in the other, from the merely selfish motives and purposes, of obtaining *popular favour*, and *applause;* and assisting towards the desired attainment of Office, Dignity, and Power. He did those actions, merely to be seen and rewarded of others, and if he succeeds, he is paid in the *coin* he desired, and therefore, he is not entitled to receive any other reward. But the man who performs the same actions, from *pious*, or *benevolent*, or purely *righteous*, or *patriotic* motives; and out of a pure conscience, has a good compensation in reserve, and will not be a loser at the last, though not receiving any human applause, or other reward of a temporal nature. Again the *power* of doing *well* or *ill*, is not always possessed; but the *will* to do either, we always have, and can *cherish* and *retain* it; and for this, we are always accountable. The man who has the *will* and *desire* to commit any licentious, unrighteous, or other wicked action, but wants the means and apportunities of performing it, is already guilty of it, in the view of righteous Heaven; because his *mind* consents to it. This, we learn, from our Saviour's declaration on the point; and enlightened reason will clearly perceive the justice of such a decision. On the other hand, he, who has the disposition and desire to do good, but cannot accomplish it, has, in the sight of Heaven, the *merit*, which such desires, if fully effected, could give him. Our Lord's declaration as to the Widow's "mite," may serve as an illustration to that effect. He said, she had given more to the Sacred Treasury, than the rich, who out of their abundance, were casting in *much*.

Not only will persons be brought into judgment for their *own* words, and works, but, also, to some extent, they will be held accountable, for the conduct of *others*, in cases where they have, by evil counsel, instruction, or example, assisted in instilling into them, *infidel*, *profane*, or *immoral* principles, and thereby influencing them, to wickedness of any kind, or by prompting or assisting them to the same. In the 2nd Chap. of the 2nd Epistle of Peter, we are informed of some, who would "bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them;" and that many, would be thereby deluded, "to follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom, the way of Truth would be evil spoken of." But, it is declared, that, "their judgment now, of a long time, lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." These declarations are fitly applicable, to all Teachers of *unscriptural*, *profane*, and *wicked* principles, of every description; to all such as have a tendency to *relax* the obligation of the Divine Laws, either by representing *good* Actions as not so *requisite*, or *bad* ones, not so *sinful*, as they really are; and by weakening the motives to obedience, by representing the future punishment of the wicked, not so tormenting as the Spirit of God, in his Word, has declared it to be; and that no future punishment, is of *eternal* duration. All Teachers of a state of Purgatory, and of final deliverance from punishment, and admission to happiness, belong to this class of deluding and *corrupting* characters, and, therefore, all, who teach such profane, and pernicious doctrines, largely partake of the guilt of those whom they have seduced into the belief of such false and destructive principles, and will, therefore, meet with similar punishment.

Further, we are clearly informed, in several parts of Scripture, that we shall be judged for our *words*, as well as our *works*. Our Lord has told us, that "for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment." Indeed considering that *words* are the first and most *natural* indications, of the *dispositions* and *intentions* of the mind; and that "Evil Communications," of all kinds, "corrupt good manners;" and that the tongue, though "a little member, defileth the whole body; and setteth on fire the whole course of nature;" and is, often, "set on fire of hell," and by its *tattling* and *backbiting*, produces *disturbances*, and

alienations in family circles and society, they are greatly deceived, who make little account of their *words*, and think that their impure and corrupting talk,—their oaths, and imprecations,—their profane or foolish Jests,—their quarrelsome and abusive language,—their private *slanders*, and *calumnies*, and their *tattling* and vain *gossip*, shall not come under review; and a righteous sentence be passed, at the final Judgment of the great day. The Lord, in His unchangeable Word has told us to the contrary, in the plainest terms.

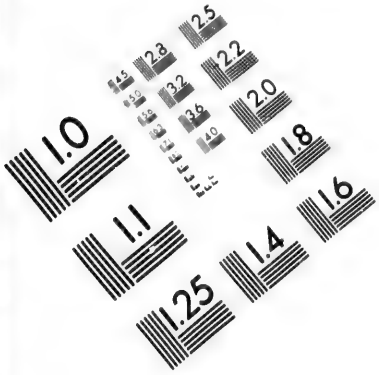
The appearance of all the Righteous, and the Wicked, for Judgment, at the *same time*, is most specially, and pointedly appropriate, not only in vindication of the Justice and impartiality of God, but for the greater manifestation of the faithfulness of the Righteous, and His approval of them; and for the confusion of the Wicked. Since many good men have been a scorn and derision to their neighbours; have done many good actions, in private, which no eye but that of Heaven hath seen; and had their sanctity and godliness traduced, as an affectation of *singularity*, or an *artful disguise* to some latent evil design, it is highly requisite, that God should vindicate these men, who have suffered reproach for His sake. And what a glorious vindication will this be, declared by the infinitely wise and righteous Judge, Himself; and in the whole assembly of Angels and Men! These faithful and approved characters, with all the rest of that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," who had patiently laboured, suffered, and endured, in their God and Saviour's righteous cause, will be placed by Him at His right hand. *There*,—clothed with *white robes*, and *palms* in their hands, and their *countenances* beaming with glory, and rapturous delight,—will they await the announcement of His righteous approbation, and the gracious and glorious rewards of their faithfulness; the anticipations of which, when in this world, they had so confidently, and joyfully cherished.

On His left hand, the Judge will arrange and place, the countless myriads of the ungodly, and wicked, of every class, and degree, who had ever dwelt upon the Earth. The following sentiments and descriptions of a pious writer, regarding their characters and appearance, and their horrifying apprehensions, at that awful Judgment Seat, are truly just

and appropriate;—"Though wickedness be, many times, very glorious and triumphant, in this World, concealed from the eyes of men, or gilded over with the form and appearance of Godliness, yet, when a light shall be struck into all the works of Darkness; through all the recesses of Subtilty, through all the disguises of Hypocrisy: when the *Mask* shall be pulled off, from all *dissembled virtues*, and every *vice* appear, in its proper colours; when these great and arrogant men, shall be stripped of their Riches, and Honours, and Power, and see all their admirers and companions, 'trembling for fear of what is coming upon them;' as well as themselves, despised and scorned by God, and His holy Angels: it is impossible, but that confusion must cover their faces; and their being exposed to the public scorn and censure, add a great deal of bitterness to their condemnation. What unacceptable company will *they* be, at this second meeting, who have *here* been brethren in *iniquity*, in *wantonness*, in *strife*, and *envy*; who have combined for public violence, and sacrificed whole Towns and Kingdoms to their private revenge. The Alexanders, and Cæsars, and all Nimrods of the Earth, how will they curse the madness of their ambition, when those thousands of orphans and widows they have made, appear before the Throne against them? How will they be astonished, when Armies, and whole Nations of murdered men, stand round about, and clamour for vengeance against them?"

To add to this Writer's exhibition, some other classes of the wicked, composing that vast Assembly at the left, *there*, also, will stand the youth of *both sexes*, who thought, or cared, for little, or nothing, but *fashions* and the vain, and varied displays, and trappings, of *dress* and *ornamental appendages*, for their *bodies*, to attract notice, and gratify the ruling vanity *within*; also, *there* will be seen, the votaries of *dissipation*, of vain and frivolous amusements; and the various other modes and scenes of reckless folly;—also, those who wasted such large portions of precious time, in depraving, and weakening still more, their *shallow* and *trifling minds*, with tales of *fiction*, *falsehood*, and *corrupting tendency*; and in their *immediate* company, will *fitly* stand *those*, who,—by a base and guilty perversion, of the intellectual powers with which Heaven had endowed them,—furnished the means, for the *mental* and *moral debasement*, and the *eternal ruin* and *misery* of the

others. *There* will stand, the weak and guilty parents, who, instead of training their children, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," as divinely commanded: and endeavouring to check and *restrain* their rising tendencies, and impulses of *vanity* and *folly*: and striving to direct aright, their *reasoning powers*, and to store and fortify their minds with *useful knowledge*, manifested towards *some* of them, a solicitude for their appearance not only in the *private circle*, but even in the *religious Assembly*, in *gay* and *ornamental apparel*, thereby cherishing and encouraging the *native vanity*; and as to *others* of them, afforded *promptings*, and *instructions*, for ardent desires and *efforts* to acquire and accumulate, *worldly possessions*: thereby assisting to implant, a *sordid* and *covetous spirit*, regardless of the claims of *Religion* and *Benevolence*. In that guilty crowd will appear, the myriads of *selfish worldlings*, whose whole *lives* and *powers*, and *energies*, had been *anxiously* and *insatiably devoted* to purposes and efforts, to obtain earthly *distinctions* and *honours*, or to acquire that *sordid gain*, "which taketh away the life of the owners thereof;" or else, in the various scenes, and modes, of *profligate*, or merely *sensual*, and *frivolous indulgence*. *There*, will be seen, the numbers, who, by their *sensual* and *gluttonous* habits, shortened their days on the Earth, having in the language of Scripture, made a *God* of the *Belly*. In suitable companionship with *these*, but in far greater multitudes, will be the victims of the *intoxicating draught*, and *fitly* united and associated with *them*, as being in *equal*, or even *greater depravity* and *guilt*, will appear, those, who, through the sordid *lust of gain*, and in the face of the *denounced woe* of the Righteous Judge, *produced*, and *freely supplied* the *poisonous*, and *maddening drink*, which destroyed the *bodies* and *souls* of the *others*, and made the *hearts* and *lives* of *Widows* and *Orphans* afflicted and destitute. *There* will be seen, the numbers, who, having secured the larger portions of this World's possessions,—often by extortion and unrighteousness,—instead of *humanely* considering the wants and claims of their suffering brethren,—as divinely commanded,—and employing their *superfluous* wealth, in ministering to the relief of their destitution, and wretchedness, lavished that superfluity to the utmost, in the gratification of the "lust of the flesh," and "the Eye," and "the pride of life;"—in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the accumulation of sumptuous and luxurious *furniture*, and *decorations* for their dwellings,—in *Jewels* and *Trinkets* for *personal adornment*,—in the rare and costly *Gems*, and productions of *Nature* and *Art*,—in *Pictures* and *Statuary*;—and in the various other extravagant modes, and exhibitions, of *Pride* and *Vanity*. In *myriads* will, also, be seen, the various classes of the dishonest and unrighteous, from the *secret peculators* in *high* and in *low places*, the *adulterating traffickers*, the *scheming* and lying, insolvent debtors, and, through all the gradations and countless modes of *Fraud* and *Knavery*, down in the scale of *Atrocity*, to the daring and violent *Thief* and *Robber*. The *vindictive oppressor*, the *malicious Murderer*, the profligate and cruel *seducer*, will prominently appear, laden with guilt, and distorted with horror and despair. *There*, also, will be the backbiting *slanderer*, now dumb with terror, the *Sabbath-violator*, and the various other classes of the impious and *profane;* the *lying jester*, who was the delight of his companions, in scenes of dissipation, revelry and folly;—the dreaming *idler*, who let the day for *tilling* and *sowing*, pass carelessly away, and now finding, only a harvest of *desperate* and *endless sorrow*. At the left hand, will, also, appear in utter dismay and terror, a vast multitude of *self-deceived Antinomians*, who had blindly presumed on possessing a truly religious character, and a fitness for an acceptable and a happy appearance, in the eternal world, and in immediate and *suitable association* with *these*, will be seen, no inconsiderable number of the professed, but *unfaithful* stewards of Sacred Truth, who, either had neglected to inform themselves aright, as to the plan of Salvation, and their Master's Will and purposes, concerning souls; and as to the due *order* in the dispensation of His Word, so as duly to *instruct*, and *exhort*, *reprove*, and *rebuke*, and render to all, as enjoined, a *portion* in the *appropriate season;* Or, else, *knowing* their responsibility and duty, on these most solemn subjects; and having under their notice, from week to week, the plain and *public* exhibitions and proofs, of the *worldliness*, and *vanities*, and divinely forbidden *conformities*, and *customs*, of those among whom they ministered, had, through the "*fear* of man," or *desire* of human approbation, and popular favour, proved cowardly, and recreant to the Truth of Him they called Master, and to His solemn command, and had failed to warn and admonish such unfaithful professors, and others, living in ungodliness

folly, and wickedness, although peremptorily charged by their Lord, to "cry aloud and spare not," to lift up their *voices* like *Trumpets* and show to all, *plainly* and *pointedly*, "their transgressions and sins." On all such, will *then* be awarded and fulfilled, the predicted righteous Judgment, of which they had been plainly forewarned, that they who so neglected their duty, should have "their portion with unbelievers," and "be beaten with many stripes."

A classified description of the innumerable myriads of the guilty, and eternally ruined, who will receive their doom at that righteous Judgment seat, need not, *here* be carried out any further. No language could fully enumerate, the various forms of profanity and wickedness, which will, *then* be exhibited; or depict or describe, their deadly and hateful atrocity and guilt, as they will be made apparent to all, under the application and review of Eternal Truth. This very imperfect Discourse on the awful subject, may, therefore, here be closed, with the following solemn, and deeply impressive, as well as appropriate language, of the same learned Divine, whose sentiments on another part of the subject have already been given;—"Let the hardiest sinner, suppose the day of Judgment come, and fancy himself surrounded with the thousand terrors of it: Let him conceive, Nature *dissolving* in Agonies; the World *flaming;* the Trumpet of the Archangel *sounding;* the Glory of God, *displaying itself*, in the Person of Christ, and armies of Angels; the *roaring* of the Sea; the *falling* of Rocks and Mountains; *dreadful flashes* of Lightning, and *volleys* of Thunder; the *shrieks* and *howlings* of Devils, and distressed sinners, attacking him from every quarter; and a guilty conscience, at the same time, *stabbing* and *terrifying* him from *within:* Let, I say, the hardiest of sinners, make this supposition, and, *then*, he will not fail to be convinced, of the reasonableness and solemn importance, of the Apostle's admonition,—'Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?' That 'when Christ shall be revealed from Heaven,' to take 'Vengeance on His enemies,' as well as to 'glorify His Saints,' we may 'be found of Him, without spot or blemish;' and having 'our fruit unto Holiness,' may, in the end, 'be made partakers of Everlasting Life.'"

SERMON XV.

ON THE "*EVERLASTING*" HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS; AND THE "*EVERLASTING*" PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

1. THE "*EVERLASTING*" HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.—"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand, there are pleasures for evermore." Ps. xvi 11.——"They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. xii, 3.——"The righteous shall shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii, 43.——"I will make thee Ruler over many things; enter thou, into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. xxv, 21.——"V. 46. "The righteous shall go away, into life eternal."——"The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." John xvii, 22.——"Who will render to every man, according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality,—eternal life."—"Glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good." Rom. ii, 6, 7, 10.——"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi, 23.——"They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life, by one,—Jesus Christ." Rom. v, 17.——"The sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii, 18.——"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. ii, 9.——"Our light affliction which is but for a moment, work-

eth for us, a far more exceeding, even, an eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. iv, 17.——"So shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv, 17.——"To an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you." 1 Pet. i, 4.——"That when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad, also, with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. iv, 13——"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you, abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. i, 11.——"This is the promise, that He hath promised us, even, eternal life." 1 John ii, 25. ——"God hath given to us eternal life: and this life, is in His Son." 1 John v, 11.——"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii, 10.——"And He that sitteth on the Throne, shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any heat; For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them: and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii, 15, 16, 17.—— "There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither the light of the Sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever, and ever." Rev. xxii, 5.

The belief that those who have been *Just* and *Virtuous* in this life, will possess a state of *happiness* in another world, has, ever been as fully entertained, by all who believed in the immortality of the Soul, as any other Sentiment of a religious nature. It is a doctrine, which has been held, not only by all professors of the true religion, under all its dispensations; but, also, generally, if not universally, even by Pagan, and Idolatrous Nations, and Tribes, and others, who have been Infidels, as to Divine Revelation. The Moral Philosophers, and others of the learned, among the Heathen, believed, and taught it, and framed, and gave forth their conceptions and systems, concerning the *Elysian fields*, or *Islands*, or other *Places*, for the abodes of the *good* and *virtuous*, where they would be free from *Evil* of every kind; and would enjoy every description of *Happiness*. They had, also many suppositions and conceits, as to the exact situation of that Place of Enjoyment. From the clear light of Sacred Revelation, with which we are favoured, all uncertainty as to the everlasting

Happiness of the Righteous, in the future state, has been so entirely removed, that none but the most obstinate and determined Infidels, as to that Revelation, can entertain any doubt on the subject. The passages of Scripture, at the head of this Discourse, with many others, reveal the cheering Truth, in the most explicit terms; and all the particulars concerning it, of which, while *here*, we need to be informed. Concerning the precise Place, or Region, of future Bliss, we may sufficiently learn from Scripture, that it is far above and beyond the Starry Heavens, on which we look; and is, indeed, that transcendantly glorious and happy place, where the Eternal and Blessed God, and our Divine Saviour, more *immediately* dwell, and manifest their Majesty and Glory. Whatever some Enthusiasts may say, as to an Heaven *within* the Soul, as the *only* one, which God has provided for the Righteous hereafter, the Scriptural Christian, is fully warranted, in taking in their *literal* sense, these words of our Lord;—"In my Father's house are many Mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a Place for you; and if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also." Equally clear on the same point, are these inspired passages,—"In Thy Presence is fulness of joy, at Thy Right Hand there are pleasures for evermore." "There shall be no night there, for the Lord God giveth them light;"—"Now, we see through a Glass darkly, but then, face to face;"—"For we shall see Him as He is;"—"And He that sitteth upon the Throne, shall dwell among them."

As regards the *nature* and *degree* of the happiness of the Righteous, in the future state, the most exalted conceptions and language of mortals, can only, afford a greatly imperfect and inadequate description, for scripture declares, that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath laid up for them that love Him." It is declared, that they shall possess and enjoy, "an eternal weight of glory." Our *perception* of any object, depends very much upon its just *proportion* and *agreement* with the *Faculty* with which we perceive it. Where the *object*, therefore, is very *remote*, or very *disproportionate*, the *perception* will, of course, be *dark* and *confused*. So it must be, of necessity, with us, while *here*, as to the

perfection of the Happiness of the Heavenly State. A knowledge of the *particulars* wherein it consists, as well as the *conditions* on which it is bestowed, can, only, be rightly obtained, from such declarations as God has been pleased to make, for our support and encouragement, while passing through our Earthly course. These declarations, indeed, sufficiently inform us, not only, that the Happiness will be of the most rapturous and abiding description; but will be derived from numerous sources, and consist in a variety of means and particulars. One of the modes of enjoyment, to most minds, even while *here*, is, that of,—viewing the grand and beautiful objects of *Nature*, and of *Art*. But what are the most *perfect* and *attractive* of these, in comparison with that Place of *brilliant Light*, and *sublime* and *magnificent Adornment*, where the Eternal God of Glory dwells; and where all the myriads of the glorified Righteous, will, forever, range through its grand and beauteous *Scenes*, and gaze upon the most lovely and glorious *Objects*, with powers for *perception*, and *enjoyment*, vastly *enlarged* and *intensified?* Another exalted mode of happiness, will consist,—in the *expansion*, and *free*, and *untiring* exercise of the Rational Faculties. Even *here*, there are *some*, though comparatively *few*, who find high enjoyments, in employing those faculties, in the search for a knowledge of the Objects in the *Natural World;* and into the Secrets and Discoveries, in the vast, and almost endless departments of Art, and Science, treasured up in the historical, and other Records of Ages past, as well as exhibited in modern times. But, *here*, such exercises, and pleasures, are being constantly suspended, or impaired, by the intense and continued exertion of the mental powers; and by the weariness and langour of the bodily system. But the saintly inhabitants of the heavenly place, will be entirely free from all such impediments; and will ever possess their faculties, in vigour and unwearied activity, for their highest contemplations, and richest enjoyment. *There*, they will be at the very Fountain of Truth and Knowledge, and will be able to fulfil their desires, with the ready discoveries of the glorious Attributes of the Almighty and infinitely Wise Creator, as manifested in His wonderful Works of *Creation*, and *Providence*, and more especially in the designs and exhibitions of His *Grace*. And, further, it may well be presumed, that

their minds will be so enlarged and elevated, and their apprehensions so quickened, that without the difficulty of study, they will be able to ascertain, whatever they desire to know, and to discern the relations and connexions of things; and be led on to perceive, in still higher and greater degrees, and with increased enjoyment, the *Wisdom*, and *Love*, and other *Perfections*, of their gracious God and Saviour.

We learn from our Lord's words, that the highest enjoyment of "the pure in heart," will be, that,—"they will see God." In another part of Scripture, we are, also, told, that upon the admission of the Righteous into Heaven, they will see God "as He is," that, "now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face," and, "then, shall know, even as, also," they are "known." We further learn from Scripture, that they shall not only attain a knowledge of the Divine Excellencies, the most perfect they will be capable of receiving, but will experience a pleasure in such knowledge, far beyond what any Saint, in his earthly state, can even imagine. To this effect, is the gracious promise;—"I will set him on high, because he hath known my name;" also, these words of the Saviour;—"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." To employ, in substance, the language of a pious Divine;—"Let us suppose a society of intelligent Beings, placed in a state, wherein they have an object of *infinite Perfections* always before them, and no evil, from *within*, or *without*, to check or divert them, exerting all their faculties upon Him, copying His *Perfections*, adoring His *Excellencies*; with their Hearts full of Love and Duty to Him; and breathing forth their cheerful Praises and Hallelujah's: in a word, exercising themselves to their utmost power, in all those blessed offices, which His Nature, and their Relation to Him require;—suppose all this, and we have before us, the very perfection of the Heaven of a Rational Creature, who is *then*, in his own proper element, and moving, and acting, in his most *natural Tendency*."

There will, also, be an equally perfect, and happy change, in the *Bodies* of the Righteous. *These* will, as declared, be made like unto their Saviour's "glorious Body." They will never feel any *wants* or *infirmities*, any uneasy importunity of appetite, any *weariness*, *pain*, or *sickness*, *feebleness*, or *decay*,

but they will *now*, eternally possess,—"Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning; and the Garment of Praise, for the Spirit of Heaviness." "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun," with its scorching, and distressing rays, "light on them, nor any heat," to weaken and oppress them, "for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living Fountains of waters;" and all "Mortality, shall be swallowed up of Life."

And, in further addition to the happiness of the glorified Saints, they will, as declared, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, be united in everlasting, and most endeared companionship, to Patriarchs, and Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, to "an innumerable company of Angels: to the General Assembly, and Church of the first born: to the Spirits of Just Men, made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant." They will, *then*, "behold the King in His beauty" and Glory; who, though *rich*, from Eternity, for their "sakes became poor,"—and patiently endured the most cruel persecutions and indignities, and the most excruciating agonies of Soul and Body, to save them from eternal misery and despair; by atoning for their sins, and, thereby, making it possible, for infinite Holiness and Justice, to accept them to favour, and to admit them to that everlasting inheritance, into which they had entered. His blessed presence, and the ardent thoughts, and feelings, of what He had done and suffered, to purchase for them such inestimable enjoyments, will constantly inspire them, in ascribing, in grateful and rapturous strains—"Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." To employ the beautifully descriptive lines, of a true and Evangelical Poet;

> Far from a world of grief and sin,
> With God eternally shut in,
> *Then*, will they see, and hear, and know,
> All they desired, and loved below;
> And all their Powers find sweet employ,
> In that Eternal World of Joy.

For the perfect enjoyment of such a state of glory and happiness, they had been *trained* and *prepared*, while upon Earth

by attaining, through *Grace*, that *Holiness*, which is essential to the obtainment and experience of such Spiritual and exalted enjoyments. It would, indeed, be impossible for the glories and happiness of Heaven to be appreciated and enjoyed, without an *holy* and *heavenly* disposition of the soul. If it were possible, that *unholy* spirits could be admitted *there*, they would find no scenes or exercises, into which they could have any desire to enter, or which would yield them enjoyment, for want of the *dispositions* and *affections*, corresponding with those heavenly scenes and employments. On the contrary, they would feel an utter aversion to them all. If they could, possibly, see the face of God, and gaze upon His Glory, they would be terrified and confounded, with a sense of their *vileness*, and *guiltiness*; and would flee from His presence, in *anguish*, and *despair*. The truth is, that God, in His Wisdom, has so arranged, as to our *Nature* and our *Duty*, that *Virtue*, and *Happiness*, *Grace*, and *Glory*, are in perfect correspondence and harmony. The righteous Man, begins his Heaven of Happiness while upon Earth, according to the Saviour's declaration,—"The kingdom of God is within you." It is "Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost," here below; and is fully possessed and enjoyed, in the glorious and eternal Mansions above. Let all, then, who desire and hope to secure those heavenly glories and pleasures, be zealous and persevering in their efforts, to have their *hearts* purified from all corrupt affections, their *minds* spiritually enlightened and their *souls* sanctified throughout, that so they may be qualified, fully to appreciate and enjoy the blersings, which are at that "Right Hand, where are Pleasures for evermore:" such, as no human "eye hath seen, or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," but "which God hath laid up, for them, that love Him."

We are warranted in concluding, from Scriptural Authority, that there will be different degrees of Glory and Happiness, in the Heavenly State, according to the different degrees of improvement of *Grace* and *Talents*, while *here*. This is consistent with the character of the Just and Righteous Judge of all the Earth. In the parable of the Talents, recorded in Luke xix. each of the *ten* Servants, received *one* Talent; and *one* of them, so greatly improved *his*, as to acquire *ten* more,

and he was rewarded by his Lord, by being placed over *ten* Cities; while *another*, had improved his Talent, only so far as to have obtained *five* more; and he was rewarded, with being placed over *five* Cities. Both of them had been diligent in their Master's Service, but *one* had been more so than the *other*, and, therefore, his reward was the *greater*. It is said, that, "every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour." It is true, that the highest degree of *grace*, and of *labour*, can never equal or deserve the lowest degree of *glory*, and *happiness*; but the difference, and the proportion, in the two cases, are to be understood, of the *work* and *reward* of *one* good man; and the *work* and *reward* of *another*; and in this comparison, the proportion is exact, and perfectly equitable. It is said, in the Book of Daniel, that, "they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever;" and our Saviour has declared,—"In my Father's house, are many Mansions." When the sons of Zebedee requested that He would place *one* of them on His right hand, and the *other* on His left, in His Kingdom, He did not promise *them*, any such distinction, but said,—"It shall be given to *them*, for whom it is *prepared*." From *these*, and other passages of Scripture, we may, certainly, conclude, that there are some particular *marks*, and *degrees* of *Glory*, with which Apostles, Martyrs, and persons of uncommon zeal, and exalted sanctity, will be honoured and rewarded, above others. Though all the Righteous shall shine in the Kingdom of their Father, yet, as "there is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars:—for one Star differeth from another Star in glory,—*so*, *also*, is the resurrection of the dead;" and *so*, *also*, as the Scriptures show, will be the differences, in the glory of the Righteous, in the Regions of the Heavenly Inheritance. These differences and distinctions, however, will not occasion the least feeling of uneasiness, in any of the comparatively *lowest* in *glory*, but every one, in that holy and blessed place, will feel his *own* happiness the *greater*, because others abound in *theirs*. They will love, and take delight in one another, and, as we are further warranted in concluding, from Scripture, *each*, and *all*, will still be attaining higher, and yet higher degrees of Knowledge, and Glory, and Happiness.

Since *these*, are the sublime, and heart-cheering Truths, which are divinely set forth, to stimulate and encourage us, in passing through this Earthly Region of sin, temptation, and trial, let us all, as the professed disciples and followers of the Saviour, be "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" that "so, an entrance may be ministered unto us, abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom, of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

2. The Everlasting Punishment of The Wicked.—"The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God." Ps. ix. 17.——"Upon the wicked, He shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup." Ps. xi, 6.——"Her guests are in the depths of hell." Prov. ix, 18.——"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xiii, 42.——"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels." Matt. xxv, 41.——V. 46. "And these, shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous, into life eternal."——"It is better for thee to enter into life, maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God, with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix, 43 to 48.——"And in hell, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Luke xvi, 23.—V. 24. "Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame."——"When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with His mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord." 2 Thess. i, 7, 8, 9.——"And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." Rev. xiii, 10.——

V. 11, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up, for ever and ever,"——"And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire, and brimstone, where the beast, and the false prophet are; and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever." Rev. xx. 10.——"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Rev. xxi. 8.

The above passages of Scripture, clearly show, that there is a Place, in some Region of the Universe, appointed by God, for the reception and everlasting punishment of evil Angels, and all the wicked of Mankind, who have died in their sins. The inspired declarations on the subject, in so many parts of the Sacred Volume, are so exceedingly express, and free of ambiguity, that it is not too much to say, that there is no scriptural truth, more positively, and pointedly revealed. Those, therefore, who deny that there is such a place, and will be such a punishment, are not entitled to be considered as true believers in any other portion of the Sacred Word, and in the Divine Veracity. Such a denial, affords a manifest proof, of the pride and presumption of the native, dark, and unregenerate mind; and its utter ignorance of the glorious attributes, and perfect character, of the Eternal and Righteous God. On these points, as on so many others, relating to Religion, the inspired declaration still applies,—"the World by wisdom knew not God." Through its pride, and blindness, it has, ever, been inventing to itself, Gods, according to its own conceptions and desires; and has never been able to ascertain the true character of the Divine Being. *This*, indeed, can never be discovered, from any *other source*, or known in any *other way*, than from implicit *credence*, to the plain testimony He has given us, in the Oracles of revealed Truth.

We are not informed of the particular locality of this place of punishment, and, therefore, any conjectures, or speculations, on the point, would be worse than useless. It may readily be concluded, that it is not, in any respect, needful that in this state of existence, we should possess such information. The extent of the Regions of Space, are far beyond

our knowledge, or even conception; and, surely, all who believe that there is a God, who created all things, may readily suppose, that He can be at no loss to find a Place, for the infliction and endurance of such punishment. As already observed, notwithstanding the repeated, and plain declarations of Scripture, of the *reality*, and the *nature*, as well as the *duration* of such punishment, there are, we know, not a few, even in this day of scriptural illustration and knowledge, and *professing*, and *thinking* themselves to be *Christians*, and believers in Divine Revelation, who, yet deny the *reality* of each, and all of those most important particulars of Sacred Truth.

On the subject of the actual infliction of such punishment, no words that can possibly be used, can make its reality more explicit, and positive, than the words of most, if not, indeed, all the passages of Scripture, concerning it. They describe that place of punishment, as,—"a furnace of fire;" a "Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone;"—a Place of "unquenchable fire;"—of "everlasting fire;"—"eternal fire;"—a "Hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." This last description, is *three times repeated*, by the Saviour, in *immediate* succession, as though to make its truth, the more positive and *impressive*. There is not the slightest hint, or intimation, in any part of Scripture, that any of these expressions are employed, in a *metaphorical*, or *figurative* sense. There is no Scripture *doctrine*, or *fact*, declared in plainer terms, and more adapted to be readily understood. Surely no objectors will deny, that the Almighty Creator, has the power to make and perpetuate such a Place. Comparatively arguing, they might better deny, that He has not created fire in the depths of this earth, which breaks forth from volcano's, in flame and heat, sending forth the liquid and destructive *Lava*, because they have never actually seen such terrible exhibitions. For the existence of these manifestations of His Creative Power, they have, merely, the assertions of their fellow mortals, as fallible as themselves, and yet they believe them, but will not credit the plain declarations of a God of infallible Truth, when He tells them, in the plainest language, that He has established such a place for punishment; and, although, at the same time, they profess, by *words*, to believe in the written Revelation He has made,

In truth, it is, in almost every instance, vain and useless to argue with such persons, either on *scriptural* or *rational* grounds. The only reason, if it may be called such, which they can really afford, and which is the amount, and final close of all their cavils and objections, is, that they *do not*, and *will not believe it*; but any *real*, or *plausible*, much less any *Scriptural why*, or *wherefore*, they do not believe there is such a Place, they cannot, possibly, offer. All such objectors, of consequence, deny any future punishment, by *external* means, or operations, of any description.

But there are others, and professing also to be firm believers in revealed Truth, who, although believing in the future punishment of the wicked of mankind, yet deny both its *nature*, as to the employment of *material fire*; and as to the *eternal* duration of the punishment. Now, first, as to the *materiality* of the *fire*, who ever heard of any other *fire*, than *material fire*? If it be *fire*, it must be of a *material* nature, for is there any such thing as *immaterial fire*, any more than *immaterial earth*, or *wood*, or *stone*? The term, *immaterial*, applied to any of them, is a plain contradiction in terms, and is nothing better than the most absurd nonsense. But, doubtless, the objector will say next, that if it be *real*, or *material* fire, such as we have in this World, it would inevitably, or necessarily, *consume* the bodies of the beings cast into it. *Must there*, indeed, be any such certain result? How did it happen, then, that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the faithful Servants of God, were not consumed by the *real* and *raging fire*, into which they were cast? The Divine Spirit of Truth, has fully informed us of the whole transaction, and has declared, that the fire was so fierce, that it did indeed destroy the persons who cast them into it; but that it did not affect *them*, in the least, not even to cause the *smell of fire* to pass upon them; and, yet, they were, for some time, walking in the midst of it. Perhaps, such objectors, in support of their profane theories, will chuse to deny the whole narrative, as some of their infidel brethren, reject and deny the account of Jonah being three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, although there is no fact recorded in Scripture, more highly and plainly authenticated, being referred to, and asserted by the Saviour Himself, who said, that,—"As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall

the Son of Man be three days and three nights, in the heart of the earth." Surely, any person of the weakest intellect, must see, at once, that if the Almighty Creator, could preserve His three Servants, from being at all injured, or affected by the fire, into which they were cast, it will be equally easy for Him, to cause, that such *bodies*, as He may give to the wicked, who will be cast into the Lake of fire, shall be of such a *nature*, that it will operate upon them *as fire*, and, as such, torment them forever, with excruciating agony, and yet, never *impair*, or *reduce* them, in the least degree. The fact, in the *first case*, is no more *marvellous*, or out of the natural order of things, in this present world, than the *other* will be, and no greater wisdom, or power, was manifested in the *first* case, than will be in the *last*. But such *shallow* and *presumptuous* objectors, may be told, that even *here*, there is known to be, one substance, if not more, which the fire will neither *consume*, or *impair*. The *Linum Asbestum*, or *incombustible flax*, is of that nature. A towel, or other fabric, composed of *this*, (one of the kind being in the British Museum,) may be thrown into the *hottest fire*, and when taken out, will not, on the nicest experiment, be found to have lost *one grain of its weight*. As a pious writer, has said, "Here is a substance before our eyes, which, even, in the present constitution of things, (as if it were an *emblem of things to come*,) may remain in fire, without being consumed." But, who, with impunity, shall dare to prescribe any limits to the power and arrangements of Him, who is infinite in Wisdom, and Power, and in all His glorious Attributes? Considering, that this infinite Being, has created this fire, He can cause that it shall act in a tormenting manner, even on separate Spirits, as well as on those in conjunction with bodies; and, therefore, He may cause that the apostate Angels,—though not, that we know, possessing bodies of any description,—shall feel the *tormenting impression of fire*, in the place He has provided for their everlasting confinement and punishment. Has He not declared, "Is any thing too hard for me?"—"With God all things are possible."

Doubtless, some of such objectors will, also deny the *everlasting* existence, and *tormenting* operation of "the worm that dieth not." Except by such characters, this part of the punishment of the wicked, is universally understood to mean,

the constant reproaches, and agonizing goadings of *Conscience*, on the keen and perfect recollection, of all the acts and forms of wickedness, designed or committed, while in this life. Such recollections, together with a sense of the wrath of God, self-condemnation,—conviction of being forever excluded from any hope of *mitigation*, or *relief* of their sufferings, but being doomed to endure them for evermore,—and the *conjoined* torment of the body, in that burning Lake, will *realize*, and *complete*, their horrible and excruciating punishment, as *thrice* described by the Saviour, as, the "Hell," where "their worm dieth not," and where is "the fire that never shall be quenched."

But, there remain other classes of objectors, on this subject of Future Punishment, whose profane Speculations, and Theories, may here be briefly noticed, and answered. One sett of them,—and they are extremely numerous,—though admitting a state of *eternal* punishment, as to the Apostate Angels, and *some* of the Human Race, yet, as to certain of the *latter*, have supposed, or rather *invented* a method, by which, through the payment of *money*, for the repetition of a *graduated* scale, or number of *prayers*, the souls of these favoured ones, may be delivered and brought out of the *Limbus Patrum*, or *Purgatory* of punishment, and *Refinement*, into which, according to the *Decreed* and *Infallable Theory*, they passed at Death. To this profane System of *falsehood*, *sordid selfishness*, and *deception*, no other answer need here be given, than this,—that it is altogether without any scriptural support, or intimation, but is a mere corrupt *Ecclesiastical Invention*, the introduction of which is known from History. It is, indeed, the fulfilment of the Scripture prediction, of the appearance and conduct of those, who "like unto grievous Wolves," should arise as Spiritual Leaders; and should "speak lies in hypocrisy;" and, "through covetousness, with feigned words, would "make merchandise" of souls. It is notorious, that in one quarter, these inspired predictions, have, for many ages, been receiving a literal fulfilment.

But another, and, if possible, more deceptive, and destructive class, or body of objectors to the Scriptural doctrine of future punishment, are those,—also numerous in all,—who, though admitting some kind of measured, and retributive punishment of the wicked, in the other world, yet, deny altogether its *nature*, as being by *fire;* and also its *everlasting*

duration. They do not, and cannot deny, that the words,—"Everlasting," "Eternal,"—"For evermore,"—"for ever and ever"—and "endless," mean, according to our ordinary and plain apprehension, and knowledge, nothing less than a state, never to end, but, yet, though allowing those words to have *that meaning*, in every other view, and on every other subject, they, inconsistently, and absurdly, deny that the words have *that meaning*, as regards the future punishment of the wicked. But, their absurd and heretical opinions, cannot alter the plain meaning of the words, as applied to that punishment. But, such objectors, doubtless, will further urge, that the word "*Everlasting*," is frequently applied, in Scripture, to things of *temporal* duration, such as,—"the Everlasting hills," of this Earth,—the Divine grant of Canaan, to the children of Israel, for an "Everlasting Possession;" and in other similar instances. In all such cases, however, the word is, evidently applied to things merely, of a *temporal* existence, and therefore, the word could *only*, by possibility, be understood to mean, or imply, any longer duration, than that of the *temporal* thing, or subject, to which it was applied. The *hills* in the one instance, are properly enough called,—"Everlasting," because, they *will* remain, and *can* remain, *only* as long as the world, of which they are a part shall continue; and we are scripturally informed, that *this* will, sometime or other, be entirely destroyed. In the other instance referred to, that of the grant of Canaan, it was made to them, at the first, on the *condition* of their *loyalty* and *obedience*, as we read in Deuteronomy chap. 28, where the Lord declares to them, that, if rebellious and *disobedient*, "ye shall be plucked from off the Land, whither thou goest to possess it: and the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the Earth, even unto the other." The land of Canaan, would have been to them, an *everlasting possession*, that is, as long as the world continued, if they had been obedient, and had acknowledged and received the promised *Messiah*, and submitted to His Rule. In both these instances, and in others of a like nature, regarding *Things* or *Subjects*, of an *earthly*, or evidently *temporal* duration, the word *everlasting* is used merely in an *accommodated* sense, and can only be understood to apply, as long as the *Thing*, concerning which it is used, remains in *existence*.

In all such cases, no person can be deceived, or mistaken, as to the meaning of the term, or suppose it to apply any longer, than the duration of the *Subject*, or *Object*, regarding which it is used. But the case is entirely different, where the word "everlasting," is used regarding *Persons* or *Things* in the *future* and *eternal World*. The words of Scripture,—"everlasting fire,"—"everlasting burnings,"—"everlasting destruction,"—"everlasting punishment,"—"eternal damnation,"—"the fire that is never quenched,"—"blackness and darkness for ever,"—"the smoke of the torment" of the wicked, "which ascendeth up for ever and ever," all relate and apply to *Persons* and *Things* in the *future* and *Eternal World*, and, therefore, all the expressions, *can* and *will* have the application and meaning, of *endless duration*. In many passages of Scripture, we find the word *everlasting*, applied to the Divine Being. In Gen. xxi, 33, He is called, "The Lord the Everlasting God." In Isaiah ix, 6, the Son, the Saviour, among His other Titles, is called,—"the Everlasting Father." In Isaiah xl, 28, are the words,—"the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth." And in Jerem. x, 10, are the words,—"the Living God, and an Everlasting King." None of such objectors, as to *Everlasting Punishment*, will doubt, or deny, that the word, "Everlasting," in these cited passages, means, *endless duration;* and they might, almost, as well presume, that the *Divine Being*, will, at any period, *cease to exist;* and, also, deny the *Everlasting Happiness* of the *Righteous*, as deny, the meaning of *endless duration* to the word, *Everlasting*, as applied in Scripture to the punishment of the *wicked*, in the other and *eternal* World. The same words, in the two *original* languages,—properly translated, "*Everlasting*,"—are employed, and with the same meaning, in the passages referred to, regarding the duration of the existence of the *Divine Being*, and, also, as to the *eternal duration* of the *punishment* of the *wicked*, and the *eternal duration* of the *happiness* of the *Righteous;* so that, if they could be understood to mean, *less* than an *Everlasting* duration, in any *one* case, they might be regarded in the same way in the *other*.

In order, as it would seem, to get rid of the truth of there being a *real fire* to torment, it is the vain conceit of some, that—"the worm which dieth not," and,—"the fire which is

not quenched" mean one, and the *same* thing, namely, the reproaches and agonies of *Conscience*. But, the distinction between the two modes of punishment, and their respective references, are too evident, from the words employed, to admit of any such absurd *sameness* of meaning. He, who uttered the words, and is *perfect* in *wisdom*, never used any such useless and vain *tautology*. Understood in that way, the words would signify,—a *vexation*, or *remorse*, that shall *never cease*, and a *vexation* that *never ceaseth*; which must, at once, be seen to be nothing better, than a *senseless* and *absurd repetition*.

In treating of the *nature*, and *extent* of the future torments of the wicked, a learned and pious Writer, has employed the following appropriate, as well as awfully graphic, and powerful language;—"Suppose we, then, a Place, wherein dwell nothing but *sorrow*, and *Despair*, *Pain*, and *Horror*, and whatever is capable of making it *intolerable* to be *endured*, and yet, *impossible* to be *evaded*; a scene, that represents, no other Prospect but the Wrath and Indignation of an angry God: *Where*, thick *Darkness*, and the most intense *Heat* reign; but no mixture of *Light*, allowed to the condemned Prisoners, but what may help them to see, the many doleful and hideous spectacles, that surround them: *Where*, wicked Men and Devils, are blended together, in one promiscuous crowd; the Wicked entirely given up to the malice and insults of merciless Fiends; and from the present state of insupportable Torments, *whetting* their fury against their Fellow-sufferers, in order to maintain a continual intercourse of mutual mischiefs and vexations; *Where* in short, nothing is heard, but *weeping* and *wailing* loud *shrieks*, and dismal *groans*, sore *lamentations*, and dire *upbraidings*, occasioned by the severity of the Torments they feel, and their former Folly, and Madness, in drawing one another into that detested Place; suppose this, I say, and we have, in some measure, a faint Image and Representation, of the dismal Abode, and conversation, wherein the Wicked are to live forever."

But, in addition to the Torments which have here been described, there will, also, be, what may well be called, a *Moral Hell*, which the Wicked will bear in their breasts, namely,—the lashings of their guilty minds; and those base and disquieting Passions, and Reflections, which possessed them, while *here* and will still remain with them; and in this

their Place of Punishment will operate with *tormenting activity* and *Power*. In the bodies they will *then* possess,—in which, as there is good reason to suppose, their souls will freely exert their utmost powers,—their views and apprehensions of Things, will be vastly more *quick* and *vigorous* than when they were impeded by the earthly Tenement; and, consequently, the sense of their *Folly*, *Guilt*, and *Misery*, and their *Remorse*, and *Anguish*, will be exceedingly more *keen*, and *poignant* than they ever before experienced. They will, *then* have a ready Remembrance of all their abominable Deeds, while in this world, with a clear and keen perception of those Eternal *Glories* and *Joys*, in Heaven which they have failed to obtain; and a quick sense of their Torments; as well as a sure Prospect of their uninterrupted and *eternal duration*. Considering all these ingredients, and modes of *Misery*, it is altogether *impossible*, even to *imagine fully*, the *Grief*, and *Remorse*, the *Rage*, and *wild Despair*, which will *alternately* possess their Souls, and cause them to break forth, continually, in *fruitless wishes*, and loud, and most doleful *Lamentations*. Such are some of the awful *Ingredients*, which will constitute the Punishment of the Wicked, in their *eternally lost Condition*.

But although, as we learn from the plain and pointed declarations of Scripture, the Punishment as to all, will be *severe*, and *horrifying*, beyond human imagination, we are warranted in concluding, that it will not be, in all, *alike*, but will *differ* in proportion to the respective *degrees* and *aggravations* of their iniquities. One part of the punishment, as we see, will consist in the *remorse* of *Conscience*, arising from the sense of *guilt*; and, therefore, where there is the greatest *guilt*, there will be the greatest *remorse*, that is, the greatest punishment, from the *sense* of it. It is, certainly, evident, that those who never had the benefit of either the *Law* or the *Gospel*, to guide them to the knowledge of God, and in the way to Holiness, and Heaven, will not, with reference to these Advantages, have any such *remorse* as those, who had, all their lives, possessed *one*, or *both* of them. Moreover, the more frequent calls and invitations a person has had, while here, to *Repentance*, the more wilfully he hath neglected the means of Grace; and the more he hath resisted the gracious motions of the Spirit of God, the greater, undoubtedly will be

his *guilt*, and, consequently, the more terrible his punishment, both as to "the Worm that dieth not," and "the Fire that is not quenched." The Wise and Almighty Being, who will inflict the Punishment, can *graduate* and *proportion* that punishment, in every case, and being infinitely *Just*, and *Righteous*, He will, as He has declared, "render to every man, according to his deeds."

There would be good reasons to conclude, that the punishment of the Wicked, in the other World, would be *Everlasting*, even if the Scriptures had not been so express and pointed, as they are, in declaring it: First, Sin being the breach of the Law, of an *Eternal* and infinitely *Holy* Sovereign, ought to be visited with *Eternal* Punishment, according to the strict rules of *Justice*, which require, that the punishment of an offence, should bear *proportion* to the *Dignity* of the *Person* offended. Moreover, as the wicked, in their state of punishment, will be under the power of the same *diabolical, base* and *furious Passions*, which possessed them while *here*, but in a far greater degree; and will, doubtless, be continually blaspheming the Being who is punishing them; and as none can be admitted to a state of Glory, without having *first* become endued with the *love of God* and *Goodness*, and a principle of *Holiness*; and as their time of *Grace* and *Probation*, as scripturally shown, has *for ever* passed away; and the endurance of such *tormenting punishment*, can never *beget love* to the Being by whom it is inflicted; it must follow, that their unholy and blaspheming condition, will *still remain*, and, consequently, their *punishment* must *eternally endure*.

The consideration of such *awful*, and *everlasting* punishment for sin, is not only suitable, and needful, for *heinous* and *careless* sinners, and the *openly ungodly*, but is proper, also, for the *professing* people of the Lord, to *quicken* them, and make them more *earnestly watchful*, and *circumspect*, in regard to avoiding all manner of Sin and Evil. The Apostles, and immediate Disciples of our Lord, with one exception, were, doubtless, the *best* among men, at that period, yet unto them, "*first of all*," in the presence of the Multitude, He addressed these words;—"I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but have no more that they can do; But, I will forewarn you, whom ye shall fear;—Fear Him, which after He hath killed, hath power to

cast into Hell; yea, I say unto *you*, fear Him." It would, indeed, be for the benefit of souls, and for the interests of Christianity, in general, if this most solemn Exhortation of our Lord, and others, of a similar *awakening* and *alarming* character, were far *more frequently* proclaimed, and enlarged upon, in the *Public* ministrations of Divine Truth, *throughout the Churches*, than is *now* the case. If such a *change* in the usual style of *Pulpit addresses*, were made, and faithfully carried out, in accordance with the *Scriptural* Plan, for *awakenings* and *conversions*, there would, doubtless, soon follow, *Revivals* of *Pure*,—and *Self-denying Religion*, which are *now*, so greatly *needed*, and so frequently implored, but which do not take place, under the *present* System, of holding forth a *variety* of merely enlightening and *pleasing Expositions*, and *sentiments*, which, however scripturally *true*, are not *adapted* to the state of *those* to whom they are uttered; and which have a tendency, rather to *engender*, and *establish*, a *false Peace*, and *security*, than to *alarm*, and *arouse* to *Repentance*, and a *turning from Sin*; or to *stimulate* and *quicken*, in the way to *salvation*.

All Professors of our Holy Religion, who are living in any degree *unwatchful*, and *inactive*, would do well to *ponder* most solemnly, the *awful* subjects, of the Divine *threatenings* against *Sin* and its *eternal* Punishment; and not to *deceive* themselves, with any *weak pretences*, which seem to *widen* the Gate of Life; and *soften* the terms of Eternal *Safety* and *Happiness*. Let them remember, the inspired warnings;—"Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for *whatsoever* a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap." Should such Professors, at any time, be inclined to think more favourably of their condition, than a just view of their *Lives* will encourage; and to hope for the Divine Mercy, at last, while any of their *Works* are Evil, they will do well to reject the supposition, or thought, of being in a state of safety, as the suggestion of an Enemy, who would ruin their souls. Let them think of the *views* and *apprehensions* which will fill their minds, on that Day of *Final Retribution;* and on its Awful Solemnities, when they will have a clear view of the indescribable Happiness, and of the horrible Miseries of another World; when, in short, Heaven, with all its Glories, shall be open before them; and, as expressed in the Book of Job,—"Hell shall be naked before us,

and Destruction have no covering." Reflecting on these *impending awful Realities*, it will be the highest Wisdom, for *all*, as scripturally commanded, to "give all Diligence," and "Work out their salvation with fear and trembling" that when "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with His Mighty Angels, in Flaming Fire," their Portion shall *not* be with those, "who shall be punished with Everlasting Destruction, from the Presence of the Lord and from the Glory of His Power;" but they shall be *among those* at His *Right Hand*, to whom He will say,—"Come, ye Blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the World."

THE END.